463 possess tea and coffee estates of their own. The rising
197 generation are, to some extent, learning Tamil and English, in addition to their own language, which is said to resemble old Canarese. And I have heard a youthful Badaga, tending a flock of sheep, address an errant
871 member thereof in very fluent Billingsgate. There were,
[877] in 1904–1905, thirty-nine Badaga schools, which were attended by 1,222 pupils. In 1907, one Badaga had passed the Matriculation of the Madras University, and was a clerk in the Sub-judge's Court at Ootacamund.

182 A newspaper discussion was carried on a few years ago as to the condition of the Badagas, and whether they are a down-trodden tribe, bankrupt and impoverished to such a degree that it is only a short time before something must be done to ameliorate their condition, and save them from extermination by inducing them to
[166] emigrate to the Wynād and Vizagapatam. A few have, in recent years, migrated to the Anaimalai hills, to work on the planters' estates, which have been opened up there. One writer stated that "the tiled houses, costing from Rs. 250 to Rs. 500, certainly point to their pros-
426 perity. They may frequently borrow from the Labbai to enable them to build, but, as I do not know of a single case in which the Labbai has ever seized the house and sold it, I believe this debt is soon discharged.
241 The walled-in, terraced fields immediately around their villages, on which they grow their barley and other grains requiring rich cultivation, are well worked, and
527 regularly manured. The coats, good thick blankets, and gold ear-rings, which most Badagas now possess, can only, I think, point to their prosperity, while their constant feasts, and disinclination to work on Sundays, show that the loss of a few days' pay does not affect
181 them. On the other hand, a former Native official on

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the Nīlgiris writes to me that "though the average Badaga is thrifty and hard-working, there is a tendency for him to be lazy when he is sure of his meal. When a person is sick in another village, his relatives make it an excuse to go and see him, and they have to be fed. When the first crop is raised, the idler pretends that 'worms' have crept into the crop, and the gods have to be propitiated, and there is a feast. Marriage or death, of course, draws a crowd to be fed or feasted. All this means extra expenditure, and a considerable drain on the slender income of the family. The Rowthan (Muhammadan merchant) from the Tamil country is near at hand to lend money, as he has carried his bazar to the very heart of the Badaga villages. First it is a bag of rāgi (food grain), a piece of cloth to throw on the coffin, or a few rupees worth of rice and curry-stuff doled out by the all-accommodating Rowthan at a price out of all proportion to the market rate, and at a rate ranging from six pies to two annas for the rupee. The ever impecunious Badaga has no means of extricating himself, with a slender income, which leaves no margin for redeeming debts. The bond is renewed every quarter or half year, and the debt grows by leaps and bounds, and consumes all his earthly goods, including lands. The advent of lawyers on the hills has made the Badagas a most litigious people, and they resort to the courts, which means expenditure of money, and neglect of agriculture." In the funeral song of the Badagas, which has been translated by Mr. Gover,* one of the crimes enumerated, for which atonement must be made, is that of preferring a complaint to the Sirkar (Government), and one of their numerous proverbs embodies the same idea. "If you

* Folk-songs of Southern India.

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kallu. There is, further, a platform, made of bricks and mud, called mandhe kallu, whereon the Badagas, when not working, sit at ease. In their folk-tales men seated thereon are made to give information concerning the approach of strangers to the village. Strangers, who are not Badagas, are called Holeya. The Rev. G. Richter gives * Badaga Holeya as a division of the lowly Holeyas, who came to Coorg from the Mysore country. In front of the houses, the operations of drying and threshing grain are carried out. The cattle are kept in stone kraals, or covered sheds close to the habitations, and the litter is kept till it is knee or waist deep, and then carried away as manure for the Badaga's land, or planters' estates.

"Nobody," it has been said, † "can beat the Badaga at making mother earth produce to her utmost capacity, unless it be a Chinese gardener. To-day we see a portion of the hill side covered with rocks and boulders. The Badagas become possessed of this scene of chaos, and turn out into the place in hundreds, reducing it, in a few weeks, to neat order. The unwieldy boulders, having been rolled aside, serve their purpose by being turned into a wall to keep out cattle, etc. The soil is pounded and worried until it becomes amenable to reason, and next we see a green crop running in waves over the surface. The Badagas are the most progressive of all the hill tribes, and always willing to test any new method of cultivation, or new crops brought to their notice by the Nilgiri Horticultural Society."

Writing in 1832, Harkness states ‡ that "on leaving his house in the morning the Burgher pays his adoration

* Manual of Coorg. † Pioneer, 4th October 1907.

‡ Description of a singular Aboriginal Race inhabiting the summit of the Neilgherry Hills.

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175
512 to the god of day, proceeds to the tu-el or yard, in
782 which the cattle have been confined, and, again addressing the sun as the emblem of Siva, asks his blessing,
(233) and liberates the herd. He allows the cattle to stray about in the neighbourhood of the village, on a piece of ground which is always kept for this purpose, and, having performed his morning ablutions, commences the milking. This is also preceded by further salutations and praises to the sun. On entering the house in the evening, the Burgher addresses the lamp, now the only light, or visible emblem of the deity. 'Thou, creator of this and of all worlds, the greatest of the great, who art with us, as well in the mountain as in the wilderness, who keepeth the wreaths that adorn the head from fading, who guardeth the foot from the thorn, God, among a hundred, may we be prosperous.'"

• 241 The Badaga understands the rotation of crops well.
242 On his land he cultivates bearded wheat (beer ganji), barley, onions, garlic, potatoes, kīrē (*Amarantus*), sāmai (*Panicum miliare*), tenai (*Setaria italica*), etc.

562 "Among the Badagas," Mr. Natesa Sastri writes, "the position of the women is somewhat different from
(462) what it is among most peoples. Every Badaga has a few acres to cultivate, but he does not mainly occupy himself with them, for his wife does all the out-door farm work, while he is engaged otherwise in earning something in hard cash. To a Badaga, therefore, his
(465) wife is his capital. Her labour in the field is considered to be worth one rupee per day, while an average male
(464) Badaga earns merely three annas. A Badaga woman, who has not her own acres to cultivate, finds work on
(262) some other lands. She thus works hard for her husband and family, and is quite content with the coarsest food—the korali (*Setaria italica*) flour—leaving the

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184 by other Badagas, but they do not employ the services of a Kurumba.

241 796 177 Important agricultural ceremonies are performed by the Badagas at the time of sowing and harvest. The seed-sowing ceremony takes place in March, and, in some places, *e.g.*, the Mēkanād and Paranginād, a Kurumba plays an important part in it. On an auspicious day—a Tuesday before the crescent moon—a pūjāri of the Devvē temple sets out several hours before dawn with five or seven kinds of grain in a basket and sickle, accompanied by a Kurumba, and leading a pair of bullocks with a plough. On reaching the field selected, the pūjāri pours the grain into the cloth of the Kurumba, and, yoking the animals to the plough, makes three furrows in the soil. The Kurumba, stopping the bullocks, kneels on the ground between the furrows facing east. Removing his turban, he places it on the ground, and, closing his ears with his palms, bawls out "Dho, Dho," thrice. He then rises, and scatters the grain thrice on the soil. The pūjāri and Kurumba then return to the village, and the former deposits what remains of the grain in the store-room (attu). A new pot, full of water, is placed in the milk-house, and the pūjāri dips his right hand therein, saying "Nerathubitta" (it is full). This ceremony is an important one for the Badagas, as, until it has been performed, sowing may not commence. It is a day of feasting, and, in addition to rice, *Dolichos Lablab* is cooked.

241 796 The other agricultural ceremony is called Devvē habba or tenai (*Setaria italica*), and is usually celebrated in June or July, always on a Mōnday. It is apparently performed in honour of the two gods Mahālingaswāmi and Hiriya Udaya, to whom a group of villages will have temples dedicated. For example, the Badagas in

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241 796 the neighbourhood of Kotagiri have their Hiriya Udaya temple at Tāndanād, and Mahālingaswāmi temple at Kannērmukku. This Devvē festival, which should on no account be pronounced duvve, which means burning-ground, is celebrated at one place, whither the Badagas from other villages proceed, to take part in it. About midday, some Badagas and the temple pūjāri go from the temple of Hiriya Udaya to that of Mahālingaswāmi. (777) The procession is usually headed by a Kurumba, who scatters fragments of tūd bark and wood as he goes (782) on his way. The pūjāri takes with him the materials necessary for doing pūja, and, after worshipping Mahālingaswāmi, the party return to the Hiriya Udaya temple, where milk and cooked rice are offered to the various gods within the temple precincts. On the following day, all assemble at the temple, and a Kurumba brings a few sheaves of *Setaria italica*, and ties them to a stone set up at the main entrance. After this, pūja is done, (612) and the people offer cocoanuts to the god. Later on, all the women of the Madhave sept, who have given birth to a first-born child, come, dressed up in holiday attire, with their babies, to the temple. On this day they wear a special nose ornament, called elemukkuththi, which is only worn on one other occasion, at the funeral of a husband. The women do pūja to Hiriya Udaya, and the pūjāri gives them a small quantity of rice on mīnige (*Argyreia*) leaves. After eating this, they leave the temple in a line, and wash their hands with water given to them by the pūjāri. This ceremonial, performed by women of the Madhave sept, is called Mandēdhanda. As soon as the Devvē festival is concluded, the reaping of the crop commences, and a measure or two of grain from the crop gathered on the first day, called nīsal, is set apart for the Mahālingaswāmi temple.

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796 front of the temple, one shouting 'How-ko, How-ko,'
(535) and the other 'Is-hōli.' The dance was taught them by
177 the Todas, and the words are Toda."

In connection with the Jadeswāmi festival the
789 ceremony of walking through fire [burning embers] is
796 carried out at Mēlūr, Tangālu, Mainelē, Jakkanāre, Tenād, and Nidugala. At Mēlūr and Tangālu, the temples belong to the Hāruvas, who carry out all the details of ceremony. The temple at Tenād is owned by the Udayas, by whom the ceremonial is performed. In other places, the celebrants are Badagas. The festival is observed, on an elaborate scale, at Nidugala during
(785) the month of January. All those who are going to walk over the burning embers fast for eight days, and go through the rite on the ninth day. For its performance,
(787) Monday is considered an auspicious day. The omens
(241) are taken by boiling two pots of milk side by side on two hearths. If the milk overflows uniformly on all sides, the crops will be abundant for all the villages. But, if it flows over on one side only, there will be plentiful crops for villages on that side only. The space over which the embers are spread is said to be about five yards long, and three yards broad. But, in some places, *e.g.*, Jakkanāre and Mēlūr, it is circular as at the
(824) Muhammadan fire-walking ceremony. For making the embers, the wood of *Eugenia Jambolana* and *Phyllanthus Emblica* are used. For boiling the milk, and setting fire to the wood, a light obtained by friction must be
372 used. The process is known as niligolu, or upright stick.
(789) The vertical stick is made of a twig of *Rhodomyrtus*
(796) *tomentosus*, which is rotated in a socket in a long thick
(824) piece of a bough of *Debregeasia velutina*, in which a row of sockets has been made. The rotation is produced by a cord passed several times round the vertical stick, of

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789 twice more. A general feast closes the ceremony, and
796 next day the first ploughings are done, the Kurumba
sowing the first seeds, and the priests the next lot.
(241) Finally, a net is brought. The priest of the temple,
standing over it, puts up prayers for a favourable agricul-
796 tural season; two fowls are thrown into it, and a pretence
782 is made of spearing them; and then it is taken and put
across some game path, and some wild animal (a sāmbhar
deer if possible) is driven into it, slain, and divided
among the villagers. This same custom of annually
killing a sāmbhar is also observed at other villages on
the plateau, and in 1883 and 1894 special orders were
passed to permit of its being done during the close
789 season. Latterly, disputes about precedence in the matter
796 of walking through the fire at Mēlūr have been carried
as far as the civil courts, and the two factions celebrate
(578) the festival separately in alternate years. A fire-walking
ceremony also takes place annually at the Jadayasvāmi
temple in Jakkanēri under the auspices of a Sivāchāri
(231) Badaga. It seems to have originally had some connec-
tion with agricultural prospects, as a young bull is made
to go partly across the fire-pit before the other devotees,
and the owners of young cows which have had their
first calves during the year take precedence of others
in the ceremony, and bring offerings of milk, which are
sprinkled over the burning embers."

796 At the Sakalathi festival, in the month of October,
(824) Badagas, towards evening, throw on the roofs of their
houses flowers of *Plectranthus Wightii*, *Crotalaria obtecta*,
*Lobelia nicotianæfolia*, *Achyranthes aspera*, and *Leucas*
*aspera*. On the following day, they clean their houses,
and have a feast. In the afternoon, numbers of them
may be seen in the streets drawing in front of their
houses pictures in wood-ashes of buffaloes, bulls, cows,

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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177 342 1900 or a little before, thatch was replaced by tiled rooves which were considered more convenient, safe and prestigeful; and the Kotas do not generally lay tiles.

For at least the past century Badagas and Kotas have been building their houses of locally made bricks. Kota bricklayers have built Badaga houses, and Badaga bricklayers have also built Kota houses. In either case the traditional ties are not necessarily involved, if only because so very few Badagas or Kotas can lay bricks properly. In these situations payment is generally made in cash according to recognized rates for the labour performed.

*Badaga Products*

177 439 Apart from the annual grant of grain and cloth to Kotas, their Badaga partners used to give them whatever cattle died. 'All the cattle that die in the villages are carried off by the Kotas, and feasted on by them . . . and at no time do the Kotas thrive so well as when there is a murrain among the herds of the Todas and Badagas' (Metz, 1864, 128).

Although Badagas and Todas used to exchange cattle on occasion, no such trade ever took place between Kotas and Badagas; indeed until the mid-nineteenth century the other communities would not allow Kotas to own any buffaloes, and after they did have some they still did not milk them (Reclus, 1891: 192; Thurston, 1909, vol. IV, 7). The Kotas would eat every Badaga or Toda buffalo that died, however, or would kill and eat an aging beast (normally a bull) given them for the purpose; but it is noteworthy that once they started keeping herds they would never eat any of their own buffalo carcasses.[8]

(249) (477) Another item for which the Kotas looked to the Badagas in the last century was opium. Good quality opium was produced on the Nilgiris at that time, but the Badagas seem to have held a monopoly on it. Today anyone can buy poppy capsules illicitly in the town markets (Thurston, 1909, vol. IV, 9).

*Irregular Services*

178 ● 241 There are certain services which Kotas are called upon to render only when some unusual situation arises. Thus Kotas do not normally help their Badaga partners to harvest the crops; but if a

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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Badaga had difficulties in harvesting a large crop he might until recent years ask his Kota partner's family to help. An agreement would be made for the Kotas to receive perhaps one-fourth or one-fifth of the harvest, in addition to the usual yearly gifts.

Another service which Kota friends may be expected to render irregularly, with or without a monetary incentive, is the supply of sexual partners. Affairs between Badaga men and Kota girls are supposedly forbidden, since the Kota can pollute a Badaga in a ritual sense. Nevertheless a Badaga (even a Lingayat) may occasionally ask his Kota partner to get him a Kota girl. Badagas claim that these girls have no objection in general to such arrangements for they believe that any offspring of these affairs, though brought up as Kotas, will have some of the admired qualities of the higher-status Badaga. No opprobrium attaches to Kotas said to have Badaga fathers. Intercourse between Kota men and Badaga women, on the other hand, is altogether impermissible.

Once in a lifetime a Kota should make a ceremonial visit to the house of each Badaga partner's married daughter. At a pre-arranged time the Kota, perhaps accompanied by his wife, goes there and presents the daughter with some woman's implement, generally a sickle. In return for this—and on behalf of her husband, not her father—the woman gives the Kota at least one item of cloth, most commonly a loincloth.

Just as there are situations in which a Badaga has to call on his Kota partner for irregular services, so are there times when the Kota may need his Badaga friend's help. In general these occur in four kind of situation. One is when a Kota wants to borrow something—usually money—that is not available in his own village. Since 1800 the Kotas have been increasingly involved in the cash economy for they have had to pay land taxes and buy musical horns and scrap iron from lowland towns, and these transactions required ready money. Secondly, a Kota may ask his Badaga partner to help him arrange for a reputable Badaga therapist to give medical treatment (Hockings, 1979b). Thirdly, as not all Kotas have regular Toda trading-partners, a Kota may have to ask a Badaga partner to arrange for some needed timber from that Badaga's Toda friend. Lastly, Badaga elders may help arbitrate in disputes between Kotas, just as Kota headmen in former times might become the judges for a serious dispute in the nearby Badaga communes.[9]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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The Kurumba watchman may still play a necessary role in the ritual of his Badaga commune; but Badagas have no part whatever in Kurumba ritual. The sowing and harvest festivals in which the Kurumba must participate are the two most important in the annual cycle. In the former he must make certain ritual utterances and cut the first furrows with a plough—today with a mere ploughshare—at an early morning ceremony in January, and then he must sow the first seeds. In the harvest festival, which falls in July, he must sacrifice a buffalo calf early one morning in a Badaga's field. Two days later he leads a procession of Badagas to their temple where he assists the priest with preparations for the ritual. Then two days after this he must make a wreath of millet sheaves, attach it to a stone archh (representing a temple gateway) and then reap the first grain of the harvest. Kurumbas now claim it was they who initially taught the ancient Badagas about these two ceremonies. During the memorial ceremony for a generation that has passed away, the commune Kurumba also has an active part. On the second day (a Monday) he brings a bamboo ladder to use in building the catafalque, and he also cuts the first bamboo pole to be used in this construction. On the following Sunday and Monday he sacrifices two goats. His role throughout all of these ceremonies is that of an accessory priest, and for this he receives some fifteen rupees (Ward, 1821, lxxvi; Birch, 1838, 103, 105; Francis, 1908, 154; Belli Gowder, 1923-1941, 13-15; Noble, 1976, 118-120).

Although he does not help at any other Badaga ceremonies it used to be considered a wise precaution to invite his attendance at any auspicious ceremony, such as a wedding or naming, and then make him some small gift that might help avert the ever-threatening Kurumba malice. For a Badaga funeral he might also receive a payment (Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 86-87), although Kurumba sorcery could not affect such an inauspicious ceremony.

There are certain situations in which Kurumba musicians play at a Badaga wedding or funeral in place of the Kota band (Grigg, 1880, 211). Traditionally it could happen either when a dispute had at least temporarily alienated a Badaga family from their Kota partner or when an epidemic was rampant in the Kota's village. Now, when most Badagas have stopped inviting Kotas to any of their ceremonies, some invite Kurumba musicians instead, while others dispense with the music altogether. If the Kurumba watchman is asked to arrange for a band of musicians his own

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175 667 having their head-quarters in the towns, who were responsible for the patrolling of the main routes, the suppression of organized crime, and the realization of the land revenue. So long as it was paid, and so long as there was no disturbance of the peace endangering the general security or outbreaks of crime preventing the safe passage of travellers and merchandise, the villages were left to manage their own affairs, with headmen and councils of elders to try their petty cases and village watchmen to prevent petty crime.

127 A detailed account of the economy up to the year 1830 (when a large part of the plateau was transferred from Coimbatore to the Malabar administration) can be reconstructed from several reports, mainly British.[6] These provide us with a list of Badaga produce which can be amended slightly by modern informants.

175 241 The main items[7] cultivated by Badagas in the early nineteenth century were wheat, barley, panic-seed, the Italian, finger and slender millets, poppy, prince's feather, mustard seed, black gram, field peas, chick pea or Bengal gram, pepper, rose-mallow seeds; garlic, onion, fenugreek, country bean, pumpkin and gourd.

175 (231) The main animal products in this period were cow and buffalo milk, clarified butter (made more by Todas than by Badagas), hides (prepared by Kotas from Badaga animals), bullocks used in ploughing and threshing, and a few large poultry. No sheep were kept, though Finicio and Birch had noticed goats in the hills (Finicio, 1603, 723; Keys, 1812, li; Birch, 1836, 103).

Materials gathered from the jungle included kitchen fuel, honey, bees-wax, hay, wild flax, gentian, sandalwood, rattan cane and black dammer or resin.

175 439 The items usually imported and exported by Badagas are also known from these same sources. The imports were coarse cloth, salt, tobacco, iron bars for the Kota blacksmith (Thurston, 1909, vol. IV, 8), coarse sugar made from a palm sap, trinkets and coinage.

Exports included wheat, barley, some superior millets, bales of millet and barley hay and wild flax (all used for fodder), poppy capsules and opium, honey, bees-wax, garlic, onion, mustard seed, pepper, fenugreek, gentian, rose-mallow seed, clarified butter, sandalwood, hides, cane—and coinage paid in land taxes to an official at Dannaika Ko:ţe.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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lxv; De La Tour, 1822, 261; Baber, 1830, 315; Harkness, 1832, 136-137; Birch, 1838, 103; 'Stocqueler,' 1845, 579; Price, 1908, 8; Sarada Raju, 1941, 107-108. On the partition of the district, see Grigg, 1880, 290-291, 303, and Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 117. See also Hockings, 1973.

7. Botanical identifications for the species referred to in this study, here arranged alphabetically, are as follows: almonds (*Terminalia catappa*), barley (*Hordeum hexastichon*), betel or areca nut (*Areca catechu*), black dammer or resin (from *Canarium strictum*), black gram (*Phaseolus mungo*), chick pea or Bengal gram (*Cicer arietinum*), coconut (*Cocos nucifera*), coffee (*Coffea arabica*), common millet (*Panicum miliaceum*), coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*), country bean (*Dolichos lablab*) fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*), field peas (*Pisum arvense*), finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*), flax (*Linum mysorense*), garlic (*Allium sativum*), gentian (*Gentiana pedicellata*), gourd (*Lagenaria vulgaris*), great millet (*Andropogon sorghum*), Italian millet (*Setaria italica*), Italian rye (*Lolium italicum*), lime (*Citrus aurantifolia*), mustard (*Brassica juncea*), oats (*Avena sativa*), onion (*Allium cepa*), panic-seed (*Setaria pallidifusca*), pepper (*Piper schmidtii*), poppy (*Papaver somniferum*), potato (*Solanum tuberosum*), prince's feather (*Amarantus paniculatus*), pumpkin (*Cucurbita pepo*), rattan cane (*Calamus spp.*), rose-mallow (*Hibiscus esculentus*), sandalwood (*Santalum album*), slender millet (*Panicum miliare*), tea (*Camellia sinensis*), tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*), turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), and wheat (*Triticum dicoccum*).

8. Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 115. This area is now the playing field between the Lawley Institute and the Botanical Gardens.

9. Baikie, 1857, 25. In the mid-nineteenth century the Sundepatti and Manna:ru Passes provided a safe short-cut for smugglers between Coimbatore and Malabar; Ouchterlony, 1848, 75; Grigg, 1880, 19, 291.

10. Nicholson, 1898, 352. Note that the deity is a Vaishnavite one; its chariot-dragging festival is still held. See above, p. 145.

11. After crossing the Bhavani River in a rattan coracle covered with skins; Mackworth, 1823, 118-119; Grigg, 1880, 295. Once a market was opened in Ootacamund Ka:ramudu ceased to have much importance for Badagas; Francis, 1908, 340.

12. *dodda habba;* on the salt ceremony, see Hockings, 1968c, *passim.*

13. This fourteenth-century fortress, now submerged by the Bhavani Dam, controlled the important Gajalatti Pass which links southern Mysore with the Coimbatore Plain; Nicholson, 1898, 425-427.

14. Ward erroneously calls the sum a dowry.

15. Later in quarter and one rupee denominations.

16. In the amounts of Rs. ¼, ½, 1, 3, 6, 12, 24 and 48; but see below, p. 172.

17. Also the case in some other districts of Madras Presidency; Buchanan, 1807, vol. II, 247; Grigg, 1880, 286, n. 1.

18. The years 1803-1805 were a period of drought in the Nilgiris; Grigg, 1880, 279, n. 2.

19. There were as yet no Moslem traders.

20. Cloth was not among the trade items. The Coonoor Pass was completed in 1833; Grigg, 1880, 17.

21. Shandy means 'market', from the Tamil *cantai.*

22. Foodstuffs were usually traded by volume rather than weight, for scales were never used in or near the Nilgiris.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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7

# *Growth of the Cash Economy*

## IMPACT OF BRITISH IDEAS ON THE BADAGA ECONOMY (1799-1850)

During the first half of the nineteenth century the British took a number of administrative steps which moved the basal Badaga economy decisively, if unintentionally, into the status of a monetized market economy. The ceding of the Nilgiri Plateau to the East India Company by the Treaty of Seringapatam in 1799 was the first step in this process. Though it was another twenty years before any British actually settled on the plateau the demand of land-revenue payment became more insistent and regulated than it had been under Tippu Sultan's tenuous régime. Badagas must therefore have been obliged to trade more persistently with the lowlands to acquire the coinage being demanded at the Dannaika Ko:ţe outpost every year.[1]

A second point of impact on the Badaga economy was the Company's policy of fixing grain prices. The rigid control of prices, attempted by the District Collectors throughout Madras Presidency, must have encouraged the Badagas to market grains in the Coimbatore Plain (which lay within that Presidency), where they could feel somewhat confident about getting satisfactory prices and not being cheated. Had the grain prices been more of a gamble the Badagas would have been less inclined to produce a surplus of grain and carry it the long distance down to the market.

When the pioneering John Sullivan came to the hills in 1819 he

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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gave Badagas superior seed grains from Europe, as well as seeds of various European vegetables.[2] This increased grain production somewhat and started Badagas growing vegetables they were not accustomed to eating. And as the British population increased so did the demand for locally grown European vegetables: a handful of Badaga farmers, being able to supply them, were thus drawn further into the market economy.

One area in which the British tried to effect early changes without success was formal education. In 1820 or 1821 Sullivan founded a school at the Wodea village of De:na:ḍu, directly above Dannaika Ko:te, but the enterprise (prompted no doubt by a need for local clerks) was apparently a failure (Ward, 1821, lxx; Hayavadana Rao, 1908, 113). In 1830 Sullivan founded another school at Ku:kalu, also in the northeast of the plateau, to teach Badaga boys the Tamil and Kannada languages. Another was probably founded by the Church Missionary Society in 1830 at Dimbaṭṭi (Moses, 1964, 11). Among the few youths who acquired some education there was an attitude that is still voiced today and portended changes in the occupation pattern: they considered themselves fitted by schooling for a lifetime of something better than manual labour (Harkness 1832, 69–70). Another school, the first to use English as a medium, was established by a former judge, George J. Casamajor, at Ke:ti in 1845. This became the local headquarters of the Basel Mission in the same year, and a school has been there more or less constantly ever since. (In 1901 it became the first Badaga high school [Francis, 1908, 332; Moses, 1964, 13].) In Casamajor's time parents had to be paid one anna a day before they would send their sons to the school. It was only in the latter half of the century, after the Mission was well established at Ke:ti and elsewhere and several more schools had been founded, that education became at all popular with Badagas. For this achievement German pertinacity should take some credit; but after 1856 Badagas began to realize that literacy in Tamil was the only sure road to jobs in the local bureaucracy and so started to value schooling (Grigg, 1880, 423).

In the early days of European settlement the British frequently needed day-labourers to do jobs in the developing Nilgiri towns. A large number of lowland immigrants now lived and worked in these towns, but Badagas were also occasionally hired by Englishmen and paid a daily rate in cash. Around 1827, however, it had been observed that

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> The hill people are so independent...that no temptation of wages will induce them to engage... as coolies, and they are only prevailed upon to work from a conviction that, refusing to do so, Government might make some just demands against them for increase of rent [land revenue]....[4]

By the 1840s there were many Badaga families earning a certain amount during a few months of each year from townspeople, from plantations and perhaps from the new Mission (Ouchterlony, 1848, 64; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 64). Their economy was now monetized, though the majority of families were still dependent on farming for their food requirements.

## EXPANSION OF THE MARKET ECONOMY (1850–1900)

During the second half of the nineteenth century far-reaching economic changes triggered by the British settlers introduced the concept of competition and the importance of valuation to the Badagas. There is little indication of any competitiveness in their indigenous exchange activities or bartering practices before about 1840.

The opening of coffee (1838) and tea (1846) plantations on the plateau called for a great deal of manual labour; and by the 1850s many Badaga men found themselves competing for the first time with immigrants in a labour market.[5] Each group constituted one-half of the work force (Grigg, 1880, 399), but the British estate owners now preferred Badaga workers to immigrants because of their diligence. The labourers were paid in cash, not grain.

Secondly, the sizeable European population on the hills was now requiring quantities of cabbage, carrot, potato and other European vegetables which some Badaga farmers were able to supply. Their tradition of intensive farming in small fields was readily adapted to the new crops (Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 35); and their venture was helped by a climate not unlike that of northwestern Europe (an English poet later was to muse on 'the sweet, half-English Neilgherry air').

During the latter half of the century a wide variety of indigenous farm products also found their way into the local market.[6] These foodstuffs were local varieties of wheat and barley, Italian, finger and slender millet, prince's feather (or amaranth), mustard seed,

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241 433 coriander, chick pea (or Bengal gram), garlic, onion, fenugreek, as well as poultry and eggs. Though officially suppressed in 1854 and again by the Opium Act of 1878, opium continued to be produced (Ouchterlony, 1848, 27–28; Baikie, 1857, 92; Metz, 1864, 153; 'Geofry', 1881, 132; Benson, 1895, 432–433; Prince, 1908, 224).

1977 241 Foodstuffs introduced by Europeans but now being grown by Badagas included:

| *Grains* | *Root-crops* | *Vegetables* | *Fruits* | *Stimulants* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Barley | Beetroot | Artichoke | Apple | Coffee |
| (new variety) | Carrot | Asparagus | Blackberry | Tea |
| Fiorin grass | Mangel-wurzel | Cabbage | Capers | Tobacco* |
| Italian rye | Parsnip | Cauliflower | Citron | |
| Lucern | Potato | Celery | Gooseberry | |
| (for fodder) | Radish | French beans | Lemon | |
| Oats | Turnip | Kidney beans | Loquat | |
| Wheat | | Leek | Nectarine | |
| (new variety) | | Lettuce | Orange | |
| | | Peas | Peach | |
| | | Savoy cabbage | Pear | |
| | | Sea kale | Plum | |
| | | Spinach | Raspberry | |
| | | | Strawberry | |
| | | | Tomato | |

*Reputedly a Toda import (Baikie, 1857, 95).

439 Trade items being imported to the Nilgiris in the late nineteenth century included four products also imported in pre-British times—sugar, salt, cotton cloth and tobacco. In addition various other Indian goods began to be imported only during the latter half of the century: almond, betel or areca, cattle, clarified butter, coconut, coriander and other spices, dried fruits, finger millet, furniture, gunpowder, Italian millet, lime, limes, oils, peas, poultry, salted fish, scrap metal, sheep, sulphur, toddy, tools, turmeric, wheat.

European articles imported to the Nilgiris in the later nineteenth century included wines, spirits, beer, clothing, candles, groceries, pottery, glass, hardware, shoes, books and stationery. It is unclear how much of these were destined for consumption by the European settlers.

Among the exports from the plateau at this time were some that had also been exported in pre-British days, namely opium, wheat

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and bees-wax. Other exports of the later nineteenth century were coffee, tea, potato, barley, resin, silk and hides.

## AGRICULTURAL CHANGE OVER THE PAST CENTURY

Until 1863 the Badagas not only cultivated fields close to the villages but also practised shifting agriculture in the wooded areas. At that time the government abolished, at least formally, the system of swidden cultivation and thereby posed a serious threat to those Badaga farmers who had depended on it (for full details, see Grigg, 1880, 314-327). According to government experts swidden farming was wasteful of timber resources and led to soil erosion. More significantly, though, there was also an eagerness among British settlers to cover vast tracts of the Nilgiris with tea and coffee plantations. In 1863 the British abolished the revenue system current in the Kundena:du area,[7] which had involved issuing a licence for each hoe and each plough without otherwise taxing or delimiting the land a man could cultivate or recording what acreage he was entitled to use. Until these restrictions came into effect many Badaga farmers made periodic use of lands five to ten times as extensive as their revenue assessments justified.[8] By about 1880 these restrictions, legislated during 1862-1864, had become realities in all parts of the Nilgiris.

The rapidly increasing Badaga population was now faced with a depleted acreage of usable farmland, a situation that worsened with erosion and land sales. For the first time in history their fields, once surveyed and registered in accordance with the Land Settlement rules, came to have a monetary value—especially as under the Waste Land Rules a man's land could be auctioned and thus irretrievably lost if he became too much in arrears with the payment of land revenue. A farmer therefore tried to hold on to as much registered land as he could.[9]

The British land legislation did not cause an immediate shortage of land among the Badagas. On the contrary, Grigg notes (1880, 480) that in the 1870s land was so 'cheap' that the Badagas who did own some or bought more tried to cultivate areas that were too large for their resources, with the result that their labour and capital were spread too thinly across the land to produce adequate returns. The slim yield of soil not properly fertilized and skimpy cultivation of too large an area impelled the poorer farmers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to sell land to British

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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177 423 planters or to engage in new occupations so as to earn enough cash to maintain themselves and pay the revenue assessments on their land (Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 64; Grigg, 1880, 325, 471, 480; Ranga, 1934, 11-14). Those made landless by the restrictions on [464] forest swidden cultivation and also the labour surplus of the immigrant and rapidly expanding population were obliged to work in the plantations for wages, which were primarily used for buying grain in the markets. By 1870 Badaga men were getting contracts as construction gangs, a few women were picking tea or coffee-beans and young boys could be seen breaking stones by the roadside.[10]

•241 311 [423] [492] [407] [423] Early in this century most Badaga families still owned and cultivated land within two kilometres of their homes. This land was usually hilly and always unirrigated. There was relatively little terracing on the hill-slopes (Grigg, 1880, 470), and most tilling was still done with ploughs and oxen.[11] The best fields lay in the valley flats, not so much because of the proximity of stream water as because of the rich deposit of topsoil. Badagas had long recognized the differences in soils and terrain, both when choosing where to plant crops and when dividing up the patrimony. Soil distinctions were important to them, but distance from the home was even more significant. Land was therefore categorized by Badagas primarily as home-farm (within a half kilometre), outfield, or jungle clearings.[2] The first type got much of the cattle manure and all human refuse; more distant land received little manure and was often left fallow (Grigg, 1880, 319-320, quoting from a Revenue Board Report probably of 1863); jungle clearings were never manured and could lie fallow for several years. Weeding, like manuring, was mostly confined to the more valuable crops growing near the home.

311 [423] A majority of the cultivable land on the plateau has always belonged to the Badagas; in the mid-nineteenth century this amounted to 12,750 hectares, of which some 6,900 ha. were cultivated each year; but thirty years later 'the occupied area of the plateau has trebled itself . . . mainly due to the extension of cultivation by the Badaga villagers'. During the twentieth century virtually all of the land under subsistence crops (barley, millets and wheat) as well as plateau land growing market [177] vegetables and fruits was farmed by Badagas and Kotas. On the other hand a majority of the land devoted to tea, coffee and 127 cinchona was in British-owned plantations. Few reliable figures

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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178 433 that agricultural production is hardly managed more efficiently today than it was nearly a century ago and that food production cannot have kept pace there with the vast increase in population.

241 Major changes in crop emphasis from the late 1800s to the present are best revealed by statistics [relating mainly to] Badaga cultivation. In 1875 there were 15,728 acres of Italian millet, 4,662 acres of little millet, 3,761 acres of barley, 3,430 acres of finger millet, 3,199 acres of wheat, only 754 acres of potatoes, 355 acres of mustard, 169 acres of vegetables, 144 acres of fenugreek, 67 acres of horse gram..., and 66 acres of poppies grown on the Nilgiris (Grigg *et al.* 1880: xii). In 1895 Italian millet was still the leading crop, but potato acreage had risen to 2,032 acres. Poppies outlawed by the 1878 Opium Act were no longer grown (Benson 1895: 432–433). Little millet had become the most cultivated cereal in 1905, and finger millet was growing in importance (Francis 1908: 164)... In 1914 there were about 4,000 acres with potatoes on the Nilgiris, but by 1920 potato acreage had doubled (Rao and Azariah 1953: 69). Before 1925 finger and little millets became the two important cereal crops, and remained the leading cereals from that time (Wood 1927: 210–223). Potato acreage has continually increased: by 1938 there were 12,000 acres, by 1950 almost 17,000 acres, and in 1960–61 there was a total of 20,600 acres in the main season and 2,400 acres in the lesser (Rao and Azariah 1953: 69; Krishnamurthi 1953: 193)... (Noble, 1968, 133–134).

(656)

178 241 Some official figures can be presented[17] to further illustrate the shift in importance of various crops on the entire plateau from 1905 to 1940 (see Table 2). These figures (which come from two distinct sources—Francis, 1908, 164; Madras 1949, 976), show the percentage of the total cultivated area devoted to each crop.

It may be noticed that while the figures for each *taluk* in 1905–1906 total 100%, those for 1940–1941 exceed 100%. This discrepancy reflects one important change in the thirty-five year period: mixed cropping became a fairly common practice. Thus two crops represented in Table 2 by separate figures would sometimes be growing simultaneously on the same piece of land.

There were very slight changes in the crop pattern for wheat, barley, finger millet and spices. A small area of pulses appeared only in the later figures (though pulses had in fact been grown in

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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Table 2. *The Nilgiri Plateau: Cropping change, 1905–1940*[a]

| | *Percentage of total cropped area* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Coonoor Taluk (Poranga:du and Me:kuna:du)* | | *Ootacamund Taluk (Todana:du and Kundena:du)* | |
| | *1905–1906* | *1940–1941* | *1905–1906* | *1940–1941* |
| *Mainly subsistence crops:* | | | | |
| Wheat | 1.7% | 2.8% | 2.9% | 3.3% |
| Barley | 5.1% | 2.7% | 3.4% | 4.2% |
| Finger millet | 1.5% | 1.9% | 7.1% | 4.5% |
| Slender millet | 14.7% | 6.3% | 4.3% | 6.2% |
| Other grains | 13.1% | 0.7% | 27.8% | 1.1% |
| Pulses | — | 1.9% | — | 0.5% |
| *Cash crops:* | | | | |
| Vegetables (mainly potato) and fruits | 5.2% (potato: 4.8%) | 18.6% (potato: 3.2%) | 3.9% — | 30.3% — |
| Spices, condiments | 0.3% | 0.7% | 0.9% | 1.1% |
| Coffee | 44.6% | 25.6% | 18.1% | 15.8% |
| Tea | 7.7% | 42.7% | 12.8% | 32.3% |
| Cinchona | 1.1% | 0.8% | 10.9% | 4.0% |
| Miscellaneous 'industrial plants' | 4.7% | 5.9% | 7.9% | 6.6% |

[a]All percentages are based on acreage.

the nineteenth century). As malaria became less of a problem and cures other than quinine appeared in India cinchona decreased in importance, but this was mainly on British-owned plantations. Miscellaneous 'industrial' plants, primarily eucalyptus, maintained a stable acreage. These slight fluctuations tell us very little, but others are much greater and more illuminating. The various millets lost much of their significance for Badagas even though these had previously been among their traditional staples. The land was planted with potatoes instead—especially after the start of the First World War. There were about 1600 hectares under potato cultivation on the plateau in 1914, and as we have seen by 1920 this figure had doubled (Hanumantha Rao & Azariah, 1953, 69). In the thirty-five year period spanned by Table 2 potatoes, together with some other quite minor vegetables, increased their (4133) acreage some five- or six-fold. Badagas did not eat much potato: clearly they sacrificed most of the acreage traditionally devoted to

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staple grains to grow marketable vegetables for cash instead.[18] Whether their diet had improved is not clear. By the Second World War a mere 3% of the entire Nilgiri population subsisted primarily on millets; the other 97% depended on purchased rice (Krishnaswami, 1947, 464). Coffee was not a successful crop in most parts of the plateau, and much of that plantation land was later given over to tea. This, together with the development of Badaga tea plantations from about 1925 onward, accounts for the great increase in tea acreage over the thirty-five year period covered in Table 2 (Ranga, 1934, 18–22).

The plantation crops called for more expertise than Badagas could usually muster and so were mostly confined to European land-holdings; even so, some Badagas were growing tea and a little coffee in the late 1920s (Ranga, 1934, 2). But potato was relatively easy to cultivate, especially as a government farm in the district helped them with seed, fertilizers and technical advice. During the past fifty years some of the more enterprising Badagas (mainly those able to obtain financial credit) have successfully cultivated tea and coffee on estates both large and small, though this was initially a ruse of theirs to increase the value of their land before selling it to Europeans.[19]

Chemical fertilizers were first used sporadically in the early 1920s; before that only cow-dung and human refuse had been available (Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 44; Grigg, 1880, 468; Ranga, 1934, 14). These chemicals led to much higher yields in the European vegetable crops and helped confirm the belief that growing food for the market was a profitable occupation. Improved seeds, notably potato, and insecticides were also adopted by the Badagas (Nambiar, 1965, 23), who were 'always willing to test any new method of cultivation, or new crops brought to their notice by the Nilgiri Horticultural Society' (Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 76, quoting from *Pioneer*, 4 Oct. 1907).

The adoption of fertilizer, insecticide and good seed was soon followed by construction of more terraces on some of the sloping fields. Progress in terracing, however, was much slower than the adoption of other innovations because it demanded a greater capital outlay than many farmers could afford; and most did not possess more than a quarter-hectare of land. Even today some cultivated slopes that badly need terracing because of soil erosion remain unterraced. It is worth noting that in the past several decades the situation has much improved because of the state

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government's making loans available on relatively easy terms for terrace construction (Grigg, 1880, 470; Ranga, 1934, 12–13).

As a result of terracing in many places and minute subdivision elsewhere, fields are usually so small that it has become inefficient, if not impossible, to plough them (Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249). For over forty years therefore the plough and oxen have rarely been seen on the plateau (Ranga, 1934, 12–13; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249; Noble, 1968, 144–145; see below, p. 167, n. 11). Much of the work load formerly carried by oxen is now taken by cheap migrant labourers from the plains; men work for daily wages of three rupees (equivalent to 40 cts. U.S.), and women for two (1970).

While the profits from potato, tea and coffee are very much higher per hectare than those from the traditional grain crops, the risks are also much greater. Not only does a farmer need ready cash to buy seed or cuttings, fertilizer and labour, but reserve cash is needed to feed his family should disease ruin the crop one season. Here the co-operative societies set up under state government guidance have helped Badagas somewhat, but less than might be expected. Short-term loans are available against land securities for all members of a society,[20] and long-term loans are obtainable from the Land Mortgage Bank (estabiished in 1937).

Before the appearance of these facilities the money-lender (a Tamilian Chettiar, a northern Marwari or a Moslem) was an ominous figure in the lives of many Badagas; for some he still is. Early in the present century the monthly interest on his loans ranged from 3% to 12.5% of the principal, but though these rates were quite extortionate loans were in general repaid (Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 64; Madras, 1928, 55; Ranga, 1934, 4). In the previous century not even these loan facilities were accessible to Badagas: they could only borrow from wealthy Badagas, preferably those related to the borrower by marriage but living in a village at some discreet distance from him. No interest was charged on such loans then.

The first Badaga co-operative society was formed at Kereha:da in 1911, the 'Kerhada Rice Rural Credit Society', named in reference to Mr. S. P. Rice, a former Collector who had initiated interest in the co-operative movement. At that time annual interest rates varied between 24% and 75% of the principal. By 1918 there were eighteen such societies, and by 1927 the plateau had fifty-four agricultural credit societies from which Badagas could get loans

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increasingly valuable to the Badagas because of rising grain prices (Mandelbaum, 1955, 240).

For many Badagas with small land-holdings the transitional period between the two World Wars was marked by the frustrations of indebtedness. Pieces of their land were sometimes sold to non-Badagas in order to pay off outstanding debts—a previously inconceivable practice. Some men went as far as the Annamalai Hills for manual labouring. Badaga debtors did, however, work hard to produce profitable cash crops or at least to buy back some of their former lands (Thurston, 1909, vol. 1, 64; Ranga, 1934, 4; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249).

With the First World War, major changes in their marketing practices became apparent. Tea, coffee and cinchona, like potato, presuppose a market beyond the Nilgiris, which in turn presupposes adequate transportation. The crucial demand for vegetables to feed the numerous European troops in India, Burma, Malaya and Ceylon stimulated the change in crops documented above (see Table 2). Similar conditions arose again in the Second World War and prompted many more Badagas to try commercial farming. On each occasion cultivators took the risk of exporting potatoes and other vegetables to new and remote markets, and some made handsome profits (Francis, 1908, 167). The risks in this enterprise were real, for men could recall occasions when floods broke the road or rail connections or the goods reached their destination only after market prices had fallen heavily. The rewards of potato cultivation were, however, of critical importance in lifting the yoke of indebtedness: during World War II the British made a great deal of capital available to Badaga farmers, as part of the 'Grow More Food' campaign. This finance and the profits from selling their highly priced potatoes did more than any cooperative loan facility to relieve the indebtedness that Badagas had been suffering under for several decades.

While tea and coffee yield a higher profit per hectare than potatoes or grains, they are more susceptible to disease than the millets and require greater agricultural skill than all other Nilgiri crops if they are to attain the standards required by wholesale purchasing agents. Moreover they need to be produced in large enough quantity to warrant the processing and transportation to Bombay (since 1940, to Cochin). Middlemen, both Badagas and others, were therefore indispensable to the few Badaga tea and coffee growers of the 1920s and 1930s. Middlemen could act as a

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1836; Metz, 1864, 6-7; Grigg, 1880, 456-458; Macleane, 1893, 403; Francis, 1908, 203, 441.

3. Metz, 1864, 8-9; an anna was 1/16 rupee, worth just under one U.S. cent today.

4. Grigg, 1880, 288, quoting from a report of December 1827; yet Harkness, 1832, 111, remarked that 'The poorer Burghers form the only class of labourers now to be procured on the hills . . .'

5. B.E.M.S., 1848, no. 18, 93; 1860, no. 20, 59; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 64; Grigg, 1880, 510-511; Watt, 1889, 465; Francis, 1908, 171, 178; Tanna, 1970, 17, 37. Tea was first grown here experimentally in 1835 from Chinese seeds, and coffee in 1838; Macleane, 1893, 403.

6. Baikie, 1857, 38, 92; Markham, 1862, 367; Metz, 1864, 99, 152-154; Ouchterlony, 1848, 2, 5, 28; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 71; Grigg, 1880, 465-467. The more important items in the list are identified botanically above, p. 146. n. 7.

7. Transferred back to Coimbatore District from Malabar in 1860; Grigg, 1880, 309, 322-323; Macleane, 1893, 216; Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 78-79.

8. Grigg, 1880, 316, 321. On the shortcomings of their agriculture in this period, see Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 31-36; Grigg, 1880, 480; 'Geofry', 1881, 132-135.

9. Grigg, 1880, 325. The Settlement of land holdings took place in 1864-1884; Grigg, 1880, 321-323.

10. B.E.M.S., 1858, no. 18, 93; 1860, no. 20, 59; McPherson, 1870, 15, 18, 21; Grigg, 1880, 34, 219-220. Tea-pickers were usually lowland labourers, for Badaga women were then afraid of being near jungle even when in gangs.

11. A few ploughs are still in use near the Si:gu:ru Pass; other villages preserve old ploughs to venerate at an annual ceremony; but in general ploughs went out of use fifty years ago; Ranga, 1934, 8.

12. Francis, 1908, 165-166; Ranga, 1934, 11-14. The lands are called respectively *ha:lihola, ka:duhola* and *so:lahola;* see Plate I.

13. Grigg, 1880, 13, citing Ouchterlony, 1848, 14; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 14. It may be illuminating to cite an example of one administrative 'village'—Ke:ti Village—which reflects how much of the plateau land was formerly owned by Badagas. The available figures come from the 1881 land settlement records and show how 3235 hectares of this particular 'village' (actually a grouping of nearly two dozen villages) were distributed in the last years before the widespread adoption there of a cash economy:

| | |
|---|---|
| Badaga farming lands | 2,083 ha. |
| Badaga grazing ground | 204 ha. |
| Toda grazing lands | 51 ha. |
| Village sites (mainly Badaga) | 90 ha. |
| Government forest areas | 123 ha. |
| Anglo-Indian orphanage and school | 307 ha. |
| Plantations (mainly British-owned) | 175 ha. |
| Government cinchona plantation | 2 ha. |
| Available for sale | 200 ha. |

(Source: Benson, 1881, 188-189)

From these data it is clear that this area, by no means an atypical one, was farmed largely by Badagas. (The 200 h.a. 'for sale' is somewhat misleading; it

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was mostly in steep rocky places ill-suited to any cultivation.)

14. Grigg, 1880, 321, mentions there were 29,912 acres (12,105 ha.) of farming land on the plateau in 1862–1863 but considers this 'a fictitious number'. Fifteen years earlier Ouchterlony had estimated that the Badagas alone used 12,750 ha.; Grigg, 1880, 13.

15. It is 19 km. by road from Ootacamund and embraces the Badaga commune of So:lu:ru.

16. That Sholur was not atypical in this respect is suggested by the fact that in 1867 the average number of persons per Badaga household for the entire district was 4.36; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 61.

17. Land utilization figures for the entire district, 1905–1960, in Nambiar (1965), do not isolate the role of Badaga agriculture.

18. Ranga, 1934, 68. As early as 1908 Francis (p. 167) noted: 'Potatoes are much exported to Ceylon, the Straits [Malaya] and Burma . . .' It was in 1908 that the railway connecting Ootacamund with the plains was completed.

19. Ranga, 1934, 14–15, 18–22. 'In fact many planters advance money to Badagas to enable them to dig pits and plant tea . . . with the intention of being able to purchase that land'; Ranga, 1934, 15.

20. Merchants also granted credit for purchase of daily needs—at much inflated prices; Ranga, 1934, 73–74; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249. Such traders are an excellent example of Simmel's 'resident stranger', whose presence catalyses a peasant economy by affording credit; Simmel, 1923, 509–512.

21. De:vaso:le, Kolekombe, Se:las, Gudalu:ru, Manju:ru, Ki:kotagiri, Neḍugula, and Naduvatta; Baikie, 1857, 38, 88; Grigg, 1880, 471.

22. Nambiar, 1965, 23. The first time this problem beset Badaga farmers was in 1880; B.E.M.S., 1880, no. 41, 37; Grigg, 1880; 134.

23. Ranga, 1934, 7–9. Badaga contractors had been involved in such work since the mid-nineteenth century; McPherson, 1870, 21.

24. Natesa Sastri, 1892, 753; Francis, 1908, 129; Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 63; Ranga, 1934, 8; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 248. These jobs included builders, blacksmiths, brickmakers, carpenters, clerks, domestic servants, painters, gardeners, washermen, teachers, printers, forest guards, tailors, barbers, water-carriers, stone-breakers, rickshaw-pullers, and even coolies and scavengers.

25. Jagor, 1876, 201–202; unlike most Hindus the Badagas do not employ washermen.

26. These were mainly Christians.

27. The categories are taken from the 1961 *Census of India.*

28. The designation is not recent; Francis, 1908, 265. On the Backward Classes generally, see Béteille, 1969, 87–145. Very recently the Nilgiri Hill Tribe Badaga Welfare Association was formed to promote government action in classifying Badagas as Scheduled Tribe, which would have material advantages for the community.

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attendance coinciding with the conversion and the take-over of some government schools by the Basel Mission. Crops partially destroyed through drought; blamed by Badagas on a curse from the Christian preachers, and by the missionaries on Badaga idolatry.

1859 Continuing drought. By now, ten mission schools opened.

1863 Legislation to stop private parties clearing land to farm in reserved forests. Famine and some migration of Badagas away from their native villages; this was blamed on the missionaries, who were preaching that Christ was responsible for all that happens. The continuing conversions usually attributed by Badagas to sorcery; very low school attendance. Further government order prohibiting the annual fire-walking ceremony.

1864 A Badaga 'oracle' when questioned by villagers indicated the 'English god' was dangerous and evil-intentioned. Consecration of protestant chapel at Ne:rikambe.

1864-1884 Land Settlement; registration of all land holdings and the real end to swidden farming.

1865 Some headmen pulled down their temples and built new but bigger ones, for the first time in brick. Famine on the Nilgiris; drought blamed by Badagas on their gods losing power. A promise reportedly made by the god Irabattaraya to come to the plateau to cure the sick and destroy the missionaries; many disappointed that he did not come.

1873 A Badaga near Wellington became a deathbed convert to the Roman Catholic faith.

1875 Massacre of eighteen Kurumbas by Badagas armed with axes; this in retaliation for a fever among the Badagas.

1876 Monsoons failed; cholera epidemic among Badagas.

1877 Smallpox and cholera epidemics and dysentery on the Nilgiris and famine throughout South India; grain prices double the usual; heavy immigration of starving unemployed people from plains near the Nilgiris; among Badagas much loss of faith in the efficacy of Hindu rituals, and some conversions.

1880 By now 183 Badagas converted to Lutheranism since 1858, and the process continuing slowly; ostracism and physical fighting still associated with each conversion.

1882 Madras Forest Act: defined forest boundaries and further restricted the cutting of timber. Family of a Kurumba

2: Hockings E-4, (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50



127 latter part of the last century (Basel Mission, 1905, *passim*) leaves no doubt of a deep disturbance among Badagas during this period. Three distinct factors were responsible:

*Land Legislation*

656 The censuses for the last few decades of the nineteenth century record a steady increase in the Nilgiri population (both Badaga and other), implying a need for more farm-land. The British administrators responded, however, with several legislative moves to conserve land resources. They stopped the traditional Badaga (241) practice of swidden farming, in which men cleared as much forest-land as they needed and farmed it for a few years before moving elsewhere. (To the British this practice was wasteful of land, and they believed it led to soil erosion.) As an additional check on the wasteful use of large tracts they compiled an exhaustive register of all land holdings in the district, the Final Land Settlement (1881–1884), and made this the basis for annual (423) assessment of land revenues. Land holdings were restricted to a maximum of five hundred acres (202 ha.). Even the custom of cutting timber in nearby jungles was prohibited by the Madras Forest Act (1882). In the years 1863–1882 legislation thus changed (182) the whole complexion of the Badaga farm economy and prompted doubts in many Badagas about the very survival of their community and culture. The situation was aggravated over this period by the continuing extension of eucalyptus, cinchona, tea and coffee plantations.

*Missionary Activity*

177 The sense of uncertainty was further aggravated by missionary attempts to convert Badagas to Christianity. This went on for many decades, and the extent of Badaga opposition to it was in a sense defined in 1856, when they burnt down the mission's rest-house at Kallatti (B.E.M.S., 1856, no. 16, 27, note). At about the same time the Revd. Metz (1864, 137) noted that 'some parties were so hostile to me that they intended bribing a Kurumba to kill me by sorcery . . . In one place the Badagas created a disturbance, and refused me admittance into their village . . .'. In 1858 the first

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50



175 school had been opened in De:na:ḍu; yet it was only after 1856
177 that Badagas perceived some value in schooling. This value lay in Tamil literacy, which was slowly becoming the one sure passport to such coveted official positions as *karnam* and *manegar*.

179 During the 1860s and 1870s legislation put an end to shifting
178 cultivation, cutting timber in the jungle and paying a light tax on undemarcated land holdings. No longer was there land available for everyone to clear and farm: those who could not pay the government land-tax became tenant small-holders, landless labourers or plantation workers. These successive blows to the customary farming practice, following hard upon the first Christian conversion (1858), fostered a half-century of mistrust of Europeans which the numerous epidemics, droughts, conversions, temple rebuildings and surveys of field ownership did nothing to dispel. Over this period land erosion became a serious problem, fields were inadequately manured and rarely terraced, much Badaga land was sold to European planters, and indebtedness became widespread. Only some villages near the towns achieved a measure of prosperity. Jakkatala, a prime case, sold much of its land to the government for the Wellington Barracks and then profitted further from contracts for gangs of labourers to build the barracks and some other public structures. By the turn of the century a few families had become very wealthy as contractors, some of them in building the railway to Ootacamund.

178 At the start of the twentieth century the Badaga population had
311 climbed to 34,000 (having increased fifteen-fold in the preceding
[61] century), and the density of the rural labour force had also increased appreciably through continued immigration. Alongside this growth Grigg (1880, 321) had observed: '... each year has the area of cultivation and permanent occupation been extending with the growth in numbers of the hill-tribes [Badagas], the increase of wealth among them, and the great extension of plantations.'[2]

178 Although tea, coffee and potato had been grown in the district
•241 for over half a century, it was only with the onset of World War I and the completion of the Nilgiri railway that Badagas shifted the emphasis in their farming from millets to potato and in the 1920s to tea as well. This made many of them cash-crop farmers, since they did not eat much potato and had to buy their food-grains in the bazaar. Their initial interest in tea cultivation was merely as a 'method of increasing the value of land before selling it to European planters.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50



By now the Badaga Christians were viewed as a separate caste, and the old antagonism over Christian conversion had given place to a new realism which accepted the British, tolerated their religion and sought to collaborate with them in the realms of commerce and administration. The periodic massacres of Kurumbas had also come to an end.

Land fragmentation and indebtedness continued to be problems for the twentieth-century farmer, but new techniques of commercial cultivation raised the per capita income appreciably. Chemical fertilizers and insecticides were now used, along with good seed and reputable tea cuttings. Money-lenders, middlemen and truckers all appeared on the scene to answer local needs. Most of the hillsides were terraced to permit efficient farming, and the emergence of co-operative societies from 1911 helped with this as well as with the more general problem of rural credit.

These new directions in the farm economy were fully in evidence by 1930, at which time most Badagas broke off their time-honoured exchange relationship with the Kotas, Todas and Kurumbas and began to seek the artifacts these tribesmen had made in town markets instead. The ostensible reasons for this break are several. Badagas usually mention the increasing cost of having a Kota band at their ceremonies; while Kotas mention an insulting article in a national newspaper of 1928, 'The Hindu', which implied that Kotas were descended from the unions of Todas with Badagas.[3] A glance at the population graph in Appendix 2, however, will make it clear that the over-riding reason for the break must have been the disproportionately large number of Badagas. By 1931 there were 42,500 of them, too many to be adequately supplied in the customary way by a few hundred Todas and Kotas.

The Second World War brought a further surge in the demand for potatoes to feed the European troops stationed throughout south and southeast Asia; at the same time government financing helped the growers, with the result that this new capital and the high prices potatoes were fetching greatly alleviated the former indebtedness of Badagas. After 1957 potato production fell sharply with a series of disease-ridden crops, and tea, first planted by Badagas some thirty years before, now became a popular cash-crop too. By 1970 cabbage had also become an important crop.

Modern Badagas enjoy a high standard of living, occupy comfortable tiled houses, send their sons to college, make frequent

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50



128 curable illnesses is described (Chapters 5-8). Some emphasis is placed on reproduction and sexuality (Chapters 3 and 4), because reproductive success is the ultimate test of any society's adaptation to its environment. The role of the therapist and associated specialists, and their relations with their clients, is an extremely critical factor in the maintenance of a folk medical system. Equally important to the propagation of this knowledge is the recruitment of apprentices and the relationships they develop with a therapist (Chapter 10). Care of the living body and the advent of death receive some consideration (Chapters 2 and 9). Finally, this study may be of particular interest to pharmacologists because it identifies each of the substances used in every medicament described (Chapters 4-7).

182 Differential interaction between Badagas and their environment — an environment which does of course include disease organisms — has over some 20 generations led to a survival of the healthier individuals, a higher fertility, and in general a steady expansion of their occupancy of the Nilgiri Massif, beginning with the founding of Tu:ne:ri village in the sixteenth century on the arrival of a few dozen refugees, and culminating in the very large and prosperous population of today (Diagram 1). The medical ethnography which follows will attempt to delineate the important factors in their adaptation.

*Introducing the Badagas*

101 1.2. The Badagas are a community of Hindu peasants who numbered
161 104,919 people in the official census of 1971. They live almost en-
131 tirely on the Nilgiri Massif, which is in the westernmost corner of Tamil Nadu State, India, some 11°N from the Equator. The great
•24 majority of them are potato, cabbage and tea cultivators, but until
[439] the early years of this century they were farming such subsistence crops as barley, wheat, and several millets. The fields surround their villages and farms. They rarely irrigate, but rely instead on the two
(233) regular monsoons. Some people also keep herds of buffalo and cattle for milk and other dairy products, but not for meat.

361 Their long rows of brick houses lie along the leeward slopes of
368 the hills, and are thus protected from the worst of the rains. In every village there are also temples or shrines to various Hindu gods.
791 Badagas are nearly all Hindus of Saivite persuasion; two small but significant minorities are the Lingayats and the Christians.

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50



of a sociologist, is that—unlike most communities on the subcontinent—the Badagas can be categorized neither as tribe nor as caste. To be precise, they are refugees drawn from several castes in southern Mysore centuries ago, who then consolidated themselves into a community on the Nilgiri Massif and to some extent may have then emulated the social organization of the neighbouring Toda tribe (Hockings 1979a).

The very name *Badaga* means "northerner" in their language, and was clearly applied to them only after they had fled from the plains immediately to the north of the Nilgiris. The reason for this flight is made quite clear in their legends: in A.D. 1565 the Vijayanagar Empire was destroyed by Muslims invading from the north. The ancestral Badagas, fearing for the safety of their womenfolk, fled to the Nilgiris and adopted a tribal type of dress for both sexes. In 1603 a certain Father Finicio, the first European visitor, encountered them on this plateau. He described them (in Portuguese) as as Badegas, and gave the impression that they then numbered 500 to 1,000 people and inhabited no more than three villages (Finicio 1603). Already they had quite a varied mixed-farming economy. The most remarkable accomplishment of the Badagas has been the consummate success with which the community has adapted to and multiplied in surroundings that were initially wild and strange for them, and which lay at an elevation 3,000 to 5,000 feet higher than did their ancestral villages on the Mysore Plain. Their agricultural success has been partly due to their adoption of foreign techniques. Typically European crops are commonly grown today on terraces made with the help of machines. The fields are nourished with artificial fertilizers and the harvest is transported in lorries. These improved techniques have led to a better standard of living and a tendency for fathers to provide their sons with the education that they missed themselves. In the four main towns of the Massif there is now a sizeable Badaga middle class, and many of the men are doctors, lawyers, teachers, or government officials. Although still largely a rural people, speaking a distinct but unwritten Dravidian language, Badagas now have an unusually high rate of literacy in both Tamil and English.

*Previous Studies*

1.3. It is possible to show in considerable detail how the Badaga

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50



(2) The lower plateau, ranging from about 5,000 to a peak at 8,640 feet, where over 350 Badaga hamlets are located. (3) The escarpments and lower slopes, primarily the home of the Kurumba and Irula tribes, who are swidden cultivators still practising some hunting and gathering, and important to Badagas for their sorcery. (4) The more westerly Waina:ḍ Plateau, averaging about 3,000 feet in elevation, which is the territory of Kurumbas, Paṇiyas, Maunta:-dan and Waina:ḍ Chettis, and of eight hamlets of Badagas, here known as Waina:ḍ Gaudas. Irrigated rice, and tea and coffee, are the most important crops there today.

Since the culture of the Waina:ḍ Gaudas has been dealt with elsewhere (Ranga 1934; Hockings 1979a), and in any case is more like a variant subculture of the Maunta:dan Chettis than like that of the Nilgiri Badagas, I will pay no attention to them in the present study, but confine myself to the Badagas of the Nilgiri Massif.

The environs of these Nilgiri Badagas have been discussed in some detail in a paper on Badaga placenames and cultural ecology (Hockings 1974), and have been accurately described in the following account of the lower and upper plateau:

> The plateau is a true tableland, its average height being very uniform. But there is not a square mile of level ground in the whole of it, its surface being broken by endless undulations which in places swell into considerable and distinct ranges. It rises most abruptly from the plains below it; and on the west. . .its sides are often sheer, bare walls, hundreds of feet in height and too steep even for trees to obtain a footing on them. Elsewhere dense forest covers almost the whole of its slopes.
>
> It is first of all divided east and west into two fairly equal but dissimilar parts by a range of heights running north and south of which Dodabetta ('big mountain') is the tallest. . . .
>
> East and south of the Dodabetta range. . . the plateau. . .is extensively cultivated by the immigrant tribe known as the Badagas. This does not improve its appearance; the great forests have mostly been felled and their place taken by the poorest low scrub or by fields of miserable cereals surrounding the squat red-tiled houses of numerous hamlets; the country is deeply scoured by every shower of rain until the infertile red and yellow sub-soil clays are laid bare; and, owing to the Badagas' former custom of

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50



shifting their cultivation from year to year to new patches of land, grass has been prevented from getting any firm hold on the denuded hill-sides. Only on the slopes of the plateau (which are too steep for cultivation) and in a few isolated Government reserves, does the forest flourish in its virgin beauty.

West of Dodabetta, however, the Badagas are more rare; hardly a field or a village (except the little clusters of huts belonging to the pastoral Todas) is to be seen. (Francis 1908: 3-4)

Let us then see how, against this backdrop, several hundred Badaga therapists have over the centuries developed a unique medical adaptation to a unique tropical montane environment.

*Badaga Medical History*

1.5. The history of health care among the Badagas is entirely speculative. Nonetheless the history of the community itself is clear enough, and on this framework (Hockings 1979a) we can at least postulate three phases in the development of Badaga therapy (1.5-1.8). This sketch may later prove inadequate, for it is largely guesswork, but heuristically necessary for our understanding of problems connected with the elaboration of a specifically Badaga montane curative system from its roots in a very different equatorial environment at a much lower elevation.

The first phase began after the year 1565 with the fall of the Vijayanagar Empire. It was this political act and the associated Muslim invasion that impelled the initial Badaga refugees to leave the plains of Mysore District and settle on the much higher Nilgiri Massif immediately to the south. These people were a mere fortuitous selection of one or two hundred from those who made up the vast genetic pools of the Mysore castes; but after settling on the hills their patterns of intermarriage were such that they became more like another isolate. Despite a preference for endogamy, though, their pool was repeatedly augmented by the arrival of occasional new settlers from the Mysore Plains who were accepted into the growing Badaga community.

A century or so after these first settlers arrived, some refugees forming the Kaṇakka clan also came to the Nilgiris. Their special importance lay in the fact that until the mid-nineteenth century the Kaṇakkas were the only Badagas who were somewhat literate. As

175 (Grigg 1880: 228, 268-69). Whatever the details of their migration may be, it is
(167) known that no further Badagas arrived from Mysore after the first English report mentioning the Nilgiri peoples (Buchanan 1807: 346-47). They have been consolidated as a community for at least two centuries (Anonymous 1819: liv-lv; Macpherson 1820: lix; Ward 1821: lxx-lxxi). Furthermore the system of socio-
178 cultural interdependence which linked the Badagas with the other tribal groups there at the beginning of the 20th Century did not differ greatly from the situation as it was sketchily recorded in 1603 (Fenicio 1603: 723). In general therefore we
101 can say that the Badagas were Kanarese-speaking agriculturists who settled in the
177 Nilgiris from perhaps six until two centuries ago, and who were there consolidated into a tribe-like community interacting with the other local tribes.

433 Records indicate that until about 1860 or 1870 the Badagas were slash-and-burn cultivators as well as settled farmers (cf. Grigg 1880: 315-17, 321; Francis 1908: 4; Thurston 1909: I, 78-79). Those who ate meat were also in the habit of hunting, until some 30 years ago. After 1860 the British administration
•241 (657) wanted the peasants to remain on the same tracts of farmland; whereupon they gradually took to cultivating European vegetables, particularly the potato, which
241 they sold for cash in the town markets (Metz 1864: 153-54). Since 1957 a series
439 of crop failures caused by a potato disease has prompted the Badagas to turn more and more to the cultivation of tea and coffee, products which are also sold locally for cash. In the past the food needs of these villagers have been satisfied by the cultivation of millets; but since about 1920 it has been more common for them to purchase rice as a staple, using money brought in by the potato, tea or coffee sales (Ranga 1934: 68).

262 Dairy produce is an essential part of the Badaga diet. Nearly every

S: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1989
AW50 Badaga AW50

# CHAPTER VI

## SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In this and the chapter which follows we shall be concerned with the socio-cultural changes that have occurred in the period since 1913, (the year we have chosen as marking the break between the traditional and the monetary economy).

### Agriculture

Until around 1860-65 the Badagas not only cultivated fields lying close to the hamlets, but also practiced shifting slash-and-burn cultivation in the wooded areas (Grigg 1880: 321). After the British land settlement of 1881-1884 this practice was completely stopped. By the year 1913 most Badaga households were cultivating their own land within a mile of their homes. The land was generally hilly and always unirrigated. The best fields lay in the valley flats, not so much because of the proximity of stream-water as because there was rich top-soil on these flats. Badagas recognized these differences in soils and terrain, both when choosing where to plant their crops and when dividing up the paternal inheritance. Soil distinctions were important, but distance from the hamlet could be yet more significant. Lands were therefore categorized by Badagas primarily as being close to the hamlet (within ¼ mile), distant from it, or in jungle clearings (Francis 1908: 165; Ranga 1934: 11-14). The first type of land received much of the cattle manure and all of the human refuse; the more distant land received little manure of any des-

•241 cription. Jungle clearings often lay fallow for several years. Weeding, like manuring, was also restricted for the most part to crops growing near the home.

(492) Prior to 1913 there was almost no terracing of the hill-slopes, and most of the tilling was done by plows drawn by pairs of oxen (Grigg 1880: 470). Coffee and tea were being grown extensively by the British at that time, but the chief Badaga crops were barley, samai and korali (the latter two being millets). No 178 311 figures are readily available for the total area of land under crop by Badagas in those days: it was reportedly little below the present amount. In the case of the administrative "village" of Sholur, nevertheless, some data are available and we can make a realistic comparison. This village is typical of Badaga settlements and has hardly changed its official boundaries since the land settlement of 1884:

| | |
|---|---|
| Total village area, 1884: | 22,520 acs. |
| Total village area, 1962: | 22,912 acs. |
| (423) Registered patta lands, 1884: | 2,257 acs., all held by Badagas |
| Estimate of patta lands, 1962: | 4,000 acs., nearly all held by Badagas |
| Number of pattas, 1884: | 49 single ones, 63 joint registrations (i.e. total of 112 pattas) |
| Number of pattas, 1962: | 372 total |
| (161) Population, 1881: | 1772 total |
| Population, 1951: | 5278 total (more recent figures not available) |
| Estimate of crop acreage, 1880-81: | 1850 acs. |
| Estimate of crop acreage, 1962: | 1500 acs. |

(Sources -- McIver & Stokes 1883; Benson 1884; Arputhanathan 1953: 43; Subrahmanyam 1962: 3-4.)

178 From this comparison evidence of several important changes emerges:

(161) a) in 70 years the population has tripled;

(423) b) in 80 years the number of registered land holdings (pattas) has more than tripled;

(423) c) in 80 years the acreage of patta land has doubled (through release of

178 government-held reserves);

(423) d) fragmentation of holdings has thus been taking place;

(311) e) the estimate of total cultivated acreage in 1962 was slightly below that for 1880-81.

128 Some official figures can be presented, in addition to these, to illustrate the shift in importance of various crops in the entire plateau area. These figures come from two different sources (Francis 1908: 164, and Madras 1949: 976), and show the percentage of the total cultivated area devoted to each crop. The earlier figures apparently relate to the year 1905-06, and the later ones to 1940-41, 35 years later.

178
241
311

| | COONOOR TALUK (Paranginad & Merkunad) | | OOTACAMUND TALUK (Todanad & Kunda) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1905-06 | 1940-41 | 1905-06 | 1940-41 |
| **Mainly Subsistence Crops:** | | | | |
| Wheat | 1.7% | 2.8% | 2.9% | 3.3% |
| Barley | 5.4 | 2.7 | 3.4 | 4.2 |
| Ragi | 1.5 | 1.9 | 7.1 | 4.5 |
| Samai | 14.7 | 6.3 | 4.3 | 6.2 |
| Other grains | 13.1 | 0.7 | 27.8 | 1.1 |
| Pulses | -- | 1.9 | -- | 0.5 |
| **Cash Crops:** | | | | |
| Vegetables (mainly potato) and fruits | 5.2% (potato: 4.8%) | 18.6% | 3.9% (potato: 3.2%) | 30.3% |
| Spices, condiments | 0.3 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 1.1 |
| Coffee | 44.6 | 25.6 | 18.1 | 15.8 |
| Tea | 7.7 | 42.7 | 12.8 | 32.3 |
| Cinchona | 1.1 | 0.08 | 10.9 | 4.0 |
| Miscellaneous "industrial" plants | 4.7 | 5.9 | 7.3 | 6.6 |

128 It may be objected that while the figures for each taluk in 1905-06 total
241 100%, those for 1940-41 total somewhat more than 100%. This discrepancy reflects one important change in the 35-year period: double-cropping became a fairly com-

128 mon practice. Thus two crops represented above by separate figures would some-
241 times be growing simultaneously on the same piece of land. (All percentages are based on acreage.)

128 Our main problem in interpreting these figures arises from the fact that
178 we cannot be certain how much of the land under these crops was in fact owned by
241 Badagas. A majority of the cultivable land in these areas has always belonged to
311 the Badagas; just how much, has not been calculated. Even so, we can be certain that virtually all of the land under subsistence crops during this century was farmed by Badagas; this was also true of land growing market vegetables and fruits. A majority of the land devoted to tea, coffee and cinchona, on the other hand, was in British-owned plantations. Coffee turned out not to be too successful a crop in many parts of the plateau, and so the land was later given over to tea. This fact, together with the appearance of Badaga tea plantations from about 1925 onward, accounts for the great increase in tea acreage over the 35-year period (Ranga 1934: 18-22).

311 It might be illuminating at this point to cite an example of one administra-
423 tive "village" in Merkunad -- Kotti Village -- which reflects how much of the plateau land was owned by Badagas. The figures that are available come from the 1881 Land Settlement records, and show how the 7993 acres of this particular "village" were distributed in the years prior to the Badagas' adoption of a cash economy:

| | |
|---|---|
| Badaga farming lands | 5157 acs. |
| Badaga grazing ground | 496 acs. |
| Toda grazing lands | 128 acs. |
| Village sites | 222 acs. |
| Government forest areas | 296 acs. |
| An Anglo-Indian orphanage and school | 762 acs. |
| Estates (mainly British-owned) | 440 acs. |
| Government cinchona plantation | 5 acs. |
| Available for sale | 487 acs. |

(Source -- Benson 1881: 118-89.)

311 From these figures it is clear that this plateau area, by no means an atypical one,
423 was farmed largely by Badagas. (The 487 acs. of land "for sale" is somewhat misleading: this was mostly on steep rocky slopes ill-suited to any cultivation.)

Let us now return to the figures on crop acreage (p. 96).

178 What were the most important changes in the crop-pattern between 1905
241 and 1940, the two years for which data are available? Wheat, barley, ragi and spices changed very little in importance. A small acreage of pulses appeared in the later figures only. Cinchona lost some of its importance, but this was mainly on British-owned plantations. Miscellaneous "industrial" plants, primarily eucalyptus, maintained a stable acreage. The very slight fluctuations in all of these figures tell us very little. But other fluctuations are much greater, and much more illuminating. Samai, korali and some other millets lost much of their significance in the eyes of the Badagas, although these crops had previously been among the traditional staples. The land was planted with potatoes instead, especially after the start of the 1914-1918 War. In the 35-year period examined potatoes, together with some other quite minor vegetables, increased their acreage some five- or six-fold. Badagas do not eat much potato; clearly they sacrificed most of the acreage traditionally devoted to staple grains in order to grow marketable vegetables (Ranga 1934: 68). By the Second World War only 3% of the entire Nilgiri population subsisted mainly on millets; the other 97% depended on rice (Krishnaswami 1947: 464).

Some major changes also occurred over this period in the plantations; but these changes affected Badagas less. The importance of cinchona decreased as malaria became less of a problem and cures other than quinine appeared in India. Coffee, while still a major crop in 1940-41, had not been too successful and so lost some of its former eminence; but tea, conversely, had increased in importance

118 just as much as the potato had. For our study of change it is significant that tea,
•241 coffee and cinchona, like the potato, presuppose a market beyond the Nilgiris. The plantation crops called for more expertise than Badagas could usually manage, and so were largely confined to European land-holdings; even so, some Badagas were
(657) growing tea in the late 1920's. But potatoes were relatively easy for Badagas to grow, especially as a government farm in the District helped them with seeds, fertilizers and advice. During the past 40 years some of the more enterprising Badagas have also successfully managed to cultivate tea and coffee in areas both small and large:

(249) > The cultivation of tea by Badagas is increasing very rapidly. The fact that the value of land rises after tea is planted plays an important part in the popularisation of tea growing... In the Salarda valley, there is a Badaga woman who is developing seed-beds of tea on quite a large scale and there are many Badagas who are cultivating excellent nurseries. (Ranga 1934: 18-19)

241 Chemical fertilizers were first used by a few Badagas in the early 1920's;
242 before that only cow-dung and human refuse had been available (Grigg 1880: 468; Ranga 1934: 14). The use of these new chemicals was of great importance, for it led to much higher yields in the new vegetable crops and so helped confirm Badagas in the belief that growing food for the market was a really profitable occupation. Insecticides and improved seeds, particularly potatoes, were also willingly accepted by the growers.

241 Improvements in the areas of fertilizer, insecticide and seed were followed almost immediately by the construction of terraces on some of the sloping fields. Progress in terracing was much slower than in the adoption of the other innovations, however, because it demanded a much greater capital outlay than most farmers could afford (Grigg 1880: 470). Even today many cultivated slopes that badly need terracing because of soil erosion still remain to be terraced. In the past few years the situation

has greatly improved, it is worth noting, because the state government has made loans available on relatively easy terms for the purpose of having field terraces constructed.

Because of terracing in many places, and widespread subdivision, fields are often so small that it would be markedly inefficient to plow them at any time (Ranga 1934: 12-13; Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 249). For the past 25 years, therefore, the plow and oxen have ceased to be used in the Nilgiri Hills. Much of the work-load formerly carried by oxen is now taken by the spades of cheap migrant laborers from the plains: men work for daily wages of Rs. 1.75, equivalent to about 35¢ U.S., and women for about 30¢.

While the profits from potato, tea and coffee are very much higher per acre than those from the traditional grain crops, the risks are also much higher. Not only does a farmer need ready cash to buy seed or cuttings, fertilizer and labor, but he may need cash to feed his family if disease ruins the crop for one season. Here the cooperative societies set up by the state government have helped the Badagas greatly. Both short- and long-term loans are available, against land or house securities, for all members of the societies (Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 249). The societies have thus gone far in protecting Badagas from the high interest-rates of private money-lenders; some societies even help farmers by supplying seeds, fertilizers, and modern implements at cost prices.

## Marketing

Traditionally the Badagas, Kotas and Todas occupied a very peripheral position in a market economy: before the British reached the Nilgiris annual trading expeditions to the market at Gundlupet, in Mysore, or to KErramadai, were the

178 greater agricultural skill than other Nilgiri crops if they are to attain the high standards required by company purchasing agents. Moreover, they need to be produced in large enough quantity to warrant the processing and transportation to Bombay.

178 Middlemen, both Badagas and others, were therefore indispensible to the few Bada-
442 gas who had ventured into tea and coffee growing in the 1920's and 1930's. Middle-
(241) men could act as a control on quality, and could amass sufficient produce to make a transaction with an exporter worth-while. As more and more Badagas became interested in growing crops for cash, middlemen appeared not only to buy small quantities of tea, coffee and potatoes, but also to act as agents in selling seeds and fertilizers, and even insurance.

After Independence the profiteering in which these middlemen had indulged
474 was finally checked. With state and central government aid, marketing cooperatives
[442] were set up in various parts of the Nilgiris to undermine the position of the middle-
(657) men by providing cheaper services (Vivekanandam Pl84 1937: 249). Now there are cooperative societies which not only find markets and pool the resources of members, but provide cheap seeds, fertilizers and implements. Many such societies now own local tea-processing factories or warehouses.

Since 1957 heavy loss through potato disease has caused some of the
241 potato-growers to plant their land with tea or coffee instead. The availability of help from the marketing cooperatives has made this sudden switch in crops possible, for otherwise the initial capital outlay and the small size of most estates would make the whole venture unfeasible.

## Communications

489 Steady improvements in the transportation systems have facilitated the
[518] production and sale of cash crops. In the last century all goods had to be carried

## Employment

463 Prior to 1913 all Badagas were primarily agriculturists; for the great ma-
592 jority of the people this is still true today. Although as much as five months of the farming year is spent non-productively (Ranga 1934: 9-10), every member of the family, even the child, makes some contribution to the traditional family economy.
241 Adults work in the fields, and are helped by boys and girls when necessary (Hark-
462 ness 1832: 114-15). Men do the heavier work, such as forking or plowing, and women do the lighter work, mainly planting, weeding and harvesting (Ward 1821:
241 lxx, lxxiii; Ranga 1934: 8). Adolescents work as cowherds, and girls also take
883 care of small babies while the mothers are out in the fields (Harkness 1832: 113).
857 Children also do the preliminary work of cooking before the women return home
462 each day. As well as field-work, women do the main part of the cooking and are responsible for all of the house-keeping, including the laundry (Jagor 1876: 201-02).
887 People too old to work in the fields stay at home minding the children and keeping an eye on what passes within the village during the day-time (Jagor 1876: 194).

178 This pattern has been modified somewhat by the trend among the more
463 educated Badagas to work away from the village. At first a few Badagas were being employed in the towns as peons, clerks, builders and laborers, and throughout the District as teachers (Thurston 1909: I, 63; Ranga 1934: 8; Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 248). During the First World War some young men worked in a muni-
(571) tions factory at Wellington. Then, in the 1920's, the first Badagas attended col-
(550) leges and returned to professional positions in the Nilgiris. Of these professionals the most influential small group have been the parliamentarians, M.P.'s and M.L.A.'s, nearly all of them coming from one family. More numerous are the doctors and lawyers. Other less well-educated Badagas who no longer follow their tradi-

178 tional occupations include school-teachers, local government officials, bus drivers,
463 and factory workers.

Our sample of 301 adolescent and adult Badaga males (aged 15-85) in 1963
463 had the following employment pattern; (the categories are taken from the Census of
[125] India):

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I | Cultivating own or rented land | 59.6% |
| II | Agricultural laborer | 5.0% |
| III | Forestry and livestock | .0% |
| IV | Cottage industries | 0.7% |
| V | Manufacturing | 3.7% |
| VI | Construction | 4.0% |
| VII | Trade and business | 0.3% |
| VIII | Transport and communications | 3.7% |
| IX | Teaching and "professions" | 13.0% |
| X | Non-workers, students | 10.0% |

It is clear that farm-work is still the most prevalent activity; but now a substantial proportion of the men are working in occupations (Categories V to IX) that are typical of participation in a monetary economy; with the important exception of commerce itself.

## Law and Administration

Since early in the 19th Century the Badagas were indirectly ruled by
177 British administrators. Contact with the British had relatively little effect in the
[175] early years, however. The transition from a barter to a cash economy was very
[65] slow, although in the last century the British did introduce a few new crops and new tools to the Badagas. Only in the 1860's did the Badagas really feel a heavy
[177] impact from the presence of the British. Two things happened at that time. One
[241] was the appearance of a separate Badaga Christian community encouraged and protected by the local Englishmen; the other was the legal end to slash-and-burn cultivation and the fixing of all field boundaries.

5: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1989
AW50 Badaga AW50

# CHAPTER VIII

# CONCLUSIONS

## Summary of Socio-Cultural Changes

121 We are now at the point where the nature of change among Badagas needs to be described in broader outline, so that it may be compared with the patterns of change documented in other parts of India. As in the preceding chapters, we shall confine our interest to changes which have occurred since 1913.

177 The cultural adjustments that Badagas have made to a changing Indian economy have relied heavily on their adoption and adaptation of alien customs and techniques. Social changes among the Badagas have been similar to changes elsewhere in India, but have at the same time been worked out independently by the Badagas to suit their own peculiar situation.

177 178 (241) Agricultural change during recent decades occurred after Badagas, no longer permitted to clear new land in the jungles, opted to reap the rich fruits of a cash market in need of fresh vegetables, and later of tea and coffee. The community was never coerced into making this important change; but because the people did choose to enter this new kind of economic relationship with non-Badagas, they (242) became involved in a long string of connected cultural changes. To succeed in growing a cash crop -- and success was imperative if people were not to starve -- the Badagas were obliged to learn new ideas about seed fertility, chemical fertilizers, terracing, and field lay-out; they had to adopt new types of tool, and discard

177 the traditional ox-drawn plow (Ranga 1934: 11); and as a result of these technological
178 changes Badagas had to develop new kinds of laboring patterns, involving contractors
(242) and non-Badaga workers. A whole nexus of new social relationships emerged: food-
stuffs had to be bought in shops, cash had to be borrowed wherever it might be had,
agents and middlemen had to be sought out and dealt with, lowland laborers had to
be employed, European planters and government farming advisers had to be consul-
ted, educated opinion had to be sought out.

In the early years of this century a new way of life was being developed by
178 the Badaga farmers. It was a way of life in which they could readily perceive that
648 certain elements from the traditional culture were no longer practicable. The close
(241) and important tie with the Kotas was a case in point: Badagas often did not grow the
millet crops they were customarily expected to give to the Kotas, and the rising
grain prices led to a situation where traditional Kota products could be obtained
much more cheaply by purchase in a bazaar. Finally, around the year 1928, rela-
tions with the Kotas were formally broken off by a majority of Badagas.

The initial change in agricultural practices led to other kinds of socio-
178 cultural change, too. These stemmed primarily from the fact that the Badagas were
(554) successful in their new ventures, and as a consequence were making cash profits
(177) on a scale never previously possible. New avenues for spending opened up, and
new consumer goods appeared in the Badaga hamlets. Those who could find more
land to buy did so: this is a familiar theme among the nouveauxriches of rural
India (cf. Epstein 1962: 85 ff.). But not very much land has changed hands in this
(454) century, and few new areas have been opened up for farming recently. Profits
(554) have therefore necessarily been invested in other ways: large new houses have
been built, watches, radios and other consumer goods have been brought into the

T 234 (361) (434) [178]

sacred buffaloes is processed in several grades of dairy-temples located within hamlets and dairy-temple centers some distance away. Clarified butter (ghee), the end product of milk processing, is sold to earn income for families and dairy-temple priests. Nowadays, a few Todas are turning to agriculture.

I Ku 361 433

While Irulas inhabit hamlets, Kurumbas occupy hamlets, semi-nucleated communities, and dispersed houses. In the past both groups depended upon garden produce and shifting slash-burn agriculture alternated with gathering, hunting, and trapping activities. Besides

I Ku 433 434 463

providing music and selling or bartering gathered products and artifacts, the Kurumbas have also obtained income from their neighbors by acting as doctors, sorcerers, and performers of agricultural ritual to ensure abundant harvests from Badaga crops. Irulas obtain additional income by supplying gathered products and artifacts to neighbors. Certain Irula families obtain fees for rituals performed by male members who are priests.

B Ko • 241 [177]

Badagas and Kotas living in hamlets or villages on the upper Nilgiris maintain kitchen gardens near their homes. They once used plows in shifting slash-burn agriculture. In this century they stopped using plows and turned increasingly from cultivation of millets to commercial potato production. After Badagas and Kotas were forced to use only assigned lands and shifting slash-burn agriculture became an impossibility, they cultivated plots alternately on their

B Ko (242)

own holdings. However, the tendency now is toward intensive, sustained land utilization aided by applications of chemical fertilizers and insecticides. Kotas have varied from Badagas in being professional

B Ko 463

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)
AW50 Badaga AW50
Kota AW55



B Ko 463 B [177]

basket makers, blacksmiths, carpenters, hide curers, potters, and musicians. Badagas worked as laborers when Englishmen started living on the Nilgiris, but have increasingly obtained clerical and professional employment. Badagas and Kotas use seasonal livestock centers to graze herds of buffaloes and cattle on the temperate grasslands. The Badagas have established a sacred buffalo herd and dairy-temple at Bergani (Figure 1). Through the cooperation of employed Kasuvas, they also manage to keep buffaloes and cattle in the Mysore Ditch (Figure 2).

B Ko 231 [648]

Excluding some Badagas dwelling in dispersed houses, Badagas and Kotas in the Nilgiri Wynaad occupy hamlets. Both depend upon rice grown in wet fields. There are assorted gardens near their houses, and the Badagas grow millets on upland dry fields. As on the upper Nilgiris, Kotas are differentiated from the Badagas by their trades. Some Badagas labor on nearby plantations.

B Ko 184 241 361 B [164]

## 2. The Philosophic Base

B 121

The premise. The interpretive approach employed in following chapters is based on the premise that members of a small culture who occupy a similar environment will repeatedly adjust and utilize the landscape in a set pattern, or in set patterns, conforming to their needs and technological capacities. Because the members are conformists, they build similar occupance forms, arrange the forms in the same fashion, and use the landscape about their dwellings according to the economy related to their culture. Adjustments to environments by members of many small cultures, therefore, result in typically

234 pasture on neighboring slopes, and processes milk into clarified
178 butter. This, as the sacred clarified butter of the Badagas, is used
(793) in lamps within the dairy-temple and for ritual at Badaga festivals
or temples. Any Badaga male may visit the Bergani dairy-temple and
(237) drink buttermilk given to him by the priest. Because women are pollut-
(372) ing, no woman may enter the dairy-temple complex itself. However,
(262) women of nearby Bergani hamlet come daily to an established point at
(562) an uncontaminating distance from the dairy-temple and there receive
(783) buttermilk for household consumption. Buttermilk from processed
sacred milk is also drunk by the priest. The priest never eats meat
793 while in office and cooks his own vegetarian food. All grains, vege-
(262) tables, and other foodstuffs needed by him are supplied by visitors
(431) or neighboring Bergani Badagas.

The festival honoring Masthi Hethai takes place on a Monday in
796 mid-January. Badaga males from all over the Nilgiris come with their
(788) Hethai sticks to worship the goddess (Plate III, B). Women may also
(562) attend, but must remain an uncontaminating distance away from sacred
(293) places. Men and women wear new white clothing, must not bring any-
(262) thing made with leather, and eat no meat during the festival. At the
(784) festival's climax, two entranced priests believed to be possessed by
(793) Masthi Hethai predict crop yields in the coming main crop season
(241) (karbokan) and inform a few men that their wives will shortly conceive.
(842) Daily and festival rituals at Bergani are thus parts of a fertility
cult related to the Badaga's economy and future prosperity.

234 Badaga hundis. The Badagas have for a long time used seasonal
361

132 winds blow with highest velocities during easterly and westerly monsoons, those in the dry, grass-burning season blow long and steadily enough to fan flames over the undulating terrain. Surface configur-
137 ation plays a vital role in the eventual highly uneven distribution of grasslands and sholas (Plate IV; A, B, and C). In a section where disturbance is negligible, shola may stretch across large expanses between two streams (interfluvial shola). With increased disturbance, grassland spreads between stream courses. When flames reach valley edges, downward slope halts or slows their spread sufficiently to enable shola survival in valleys. Sholas will eventually be located mainly in valleys and may then form a dendritic pattern (dendritic shola). The importance of surface configuration is also revealed by the fact that small sholas (patch sholas) manage to exist in interfluvial depressions where vegetation is protected from upward moving flames. If fires through time are able to change vegetation on the landscape, one would suspect that they could ultimately produce grasslands in depressions and valleys. In the Nilgiris such is apparently the case, for occasional valley bottoms and adjacent hillsides are almost entirely in grass. Where such extreme changes have occurred, streams may become intermittent.

137 318 Not all grasslands were slow to form; some grassy tracts probably came into existence within a decade. Todas long have employed axes to fell trees, so they could obtain planks for hut construction, logs and branches to build fences, or firewood to heat food, produce
• (241) warmth, and cremate their dead. Badagas, Kotas, and more recent migrants to the Nilgiris cleared large tracts for crop production, and

137 318 (241) have utilized wood for the same purposes as Todas. Some abandoned agricultural tracts are now covered by grass, while others are covered by shrubs or tree growth. Annual firings and grazing play vital roles in grassland formation and maintenance. Examples of rapid forest removal leading to grassland formation are offered by clearings presently formed by Badagas near Toda hamlets. After trees are axed down (241) and disposed of, potatoes are cultivated. As cultivation continues, surviving scattered trees are slowly cut out. If after a few years cultivation is suspended due to soil deterioration or non-renewal of a contract with Todas, the once cultivated plots may rapidly become grass covered (Plate IV; D, E, and F). New grassland formation and maintenance result from buffaloes grazing on grasses which have sprung up over the plots, coupled in many cases with periodic burning of the grasses.

172 Megalithic Cult members once living on the upper Nilgiris may have been farmers and livestock rearers. The question of whether Megalithic monuments were erected before or after ancestral Todas came to the upper Nilgiris remains unanswered. Apart from fragments of numerous pottery buffaloes in Megalithic sites, there is little conjectural association between the monument builders and Todas - unless ancestral Todas are assumed to have been bronze-iron age warriors whose descendents abandoned warfare and turned to herding only buffaloes. Construction dates for Nilgiri Megalithic sites have not been established, but may tentatively be related to a period covering a few centuries before and after 1 A.D.[9] On lids of funerary urns buried within stone circles on mountain tops (Plate V, A), figures resembling horses,

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)
AW50 Badaga AW50
Kota AW55



B Ko 433 [241] Ko 433

and other cereals, and probably from their kitchen gardens obtained most produce which was bartered or sold. In the later part of the last century shifting slash-burn agriculture was legally abolished. During this century the Badagas and Kotas abandoned the use of plows and turned to commercial potato production. Economic differentiation between the two groups is based mainly on the fact that Kotas have been partially supported by basketry, blacksmithing, carpentry, hide curing, pot making, and the playing of music. These supplementary activities of the Kotas, practiced to varying degrees by other Indian groups, are commonly associated with low social ranking.

## 1. The Badagas

B 861 [175] [311] B [342] B 243 [351] [361] B 241 [361]

Occupance pattern. Most Badaga hamlets and villages are located above 6,000 feet and east of the grasslands inhabited mainly by Todas (Figure 2). Harkness' description of Hanjanad before 1832 indicates that the basic Badaga occupance pattern remains unchanged. There was cultivated land around the village, and cattle grazed on nearby grasslands. Houses aligned horizontally into two house-rows on a hill side had joined front porches facing the down slope. A flat courtyard before each house-row was used to hand-thresh and dry grain in the sun. Both courtyards were edged on the outside by low stone walls. At one end of the village there was a compacted circle on which cattle trod out grain, and at the other end there were several cattle enclosures (Harkness 1832: 36-37). Badaga farmers continue to live together in communities, and they cultivate nearby kitchen gardens plus near to distant dry fields (Plate X, A). Coffee, tea, and multilayer gardens

241 with mixed plants are also maintained, but these gardens may be miles away from their owners' houses and on outer Nilgiri slopes. Because
423 land is divided equally among sons upon a father's death, extensive
428 land fragmentation has taken place. To prevent further fragmentation, there is now a tendency for sons to share and jointly manage land.
311 Communal pastures are close enough to permit the keeping of livestock
361 in communities. Individually owned and communal plots covered with
245 acacia, eucalyptus, and temperate fruit trees now occur near Badaga
137 communities. Due to intensive or slowly continued tempera-- forest
318 clearance, only a few small remnant patches of natural fore -ain on the slopes near many hamlets and villages.

The outstanding features of Badaga hamlets and villages are the
361 house-rows with compacted earth courtyards edged by low walls (Figure
351 17). House rows within a single community usually parallel each other and are frequently aligned in an easterly-westerly direction, but on
361 flatter terrain they may surround a courtyard on two sides. Because
364 the Badagas consider it sinful to throw waste water toward the sun,
783 Lord Shiva's emblem, through alignment of houses in an easterly-westerly direction housewives may throw waste water through the back door or over the front courtyard wall without throwing it toward the sun.
841 One dwelling within a community house-row is set apart as a confinement place for menstruating women or women undergoing a postnatal pollution
368 period. In addition to dwellings, house-like temples are built into
243 house-rows. Grain is threshed and agricultural produce or firewood is
313 dried on the courtyards. These also serve as playgrounds for children,
857 as sites for performance of ceremonial rites, and as dance arenas
796
535

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 1231

648 Thoraiyas to virtually remain serfs, despite outside job opportunities. Female and male Thoraiyas continue to work on Badaga landholdings and serve in Badaga homes. Thoraiya males trained, for example, to be barbers, blacksmiths, brickmakers, carpenters, or washermen, have further served the Badagas. For their services, Thoraiyas are paid in cash and in kind. At periodic intervals and upon special occasions, such as Thoraiya weddings, presents are imparted by Badaga masters.

175 •241 Plants exploited by the Badagas. A representative list of plants grown by the Badagas in the early 1800s is obtained from the writings of Keys and Harkness (Table III). Millet species were apparently the main subsistence cereals, but it is worth noting that barley and wheat were also raised. Plants grown commercially at that time were fenugreek (Trigonella foenum-graecum L.), garlic, mustard, and poppies (Harkness 1832: 138). Poppy juice, the source of salable opium, was extracted by women and children. Iron nails were used to scratch poppy capsules in the evenings, and gummy exudations were collected on following mornings. Capsules thus scratched every four days eventually died. Opium slowly obtained in this fashion was eaten and not smoked. Seeds collected from dead capsules were sold after sun-drying, and by boiling remaining capsule shells in water a stupefying beverage was obtained (Francis 1908: 290-291; Metz 1864: 153; Ward 1821: lxiii). According to Metz (1864: 153), fenugreek was sold to low country merchants; men from Coimbatore bought large quantities of garlic and onions, which were carried down to the plains on bullocks; and mustard seed sale alone was said by the Badagas

175 249

175 276

439 (651)

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 331

6: Noble - K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)

AWS0 Badaga AWS0
Kota AWS5
Kurumba AWS6
Toda AW60
Madras Tribes AW63
Kasuva



TABLE III

PLANTS GROWN ON THE UPPER NILGIRIS PRIOR TO 1836

175
•241

Cultivated Plants Listed By Keys (1812: 11)

Black peas (Phaseolus mungo Roxb.?)
Garlic (Allium sativum L.)
Gaunji (Hordeum sp.)
Mustard (Brassica juncea Hk. & T.)
Poppy (Papaver somniferum L.)
Shaune (Panicum sumatrense Roth & Schult) - two varieties
Ventheum (Trigonella foenum-graecum L.)
Wheat (Triticum sp.)

Harkness' List of Plants Grown By Badagas (1832: 136-137)

Barley (Hordeum sp.)
Garlic
Gourd (Lagenaria sp.)
Kirie (Amaranthus sp.)
Koralee (probably a variety of Setaria italica Beauv.)
Mochhie (Dolichos lablab L.)
Mustard
Onion (Allium cepa L.)
Poppy
Pumpkin (Cucurbita pepo L.)
Rhshi (Eleusine coracana Gaertn.)
Shamie (Panicum sumatrense Roth & Schult)
Shanaugge (Ervum lens L.)
Tennie (Setaria italica Beauv.)
Vatta kadolie (Cicer arietinum L.)
Varaku (Paspalum scrobiculatum L.)
Vendey (Trigonella foenum-graecum L.)
Wheat

Plants Introduced By The English (Baikie 1834: 35-36; Jervis 1834: 46; Mignon 1834: 83; Price 1908: 122; Hutchins 1883: 1; United Planters Association of Southern India 1960: xxxiii)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Artichoke | Kale | Savoy | Apple |
| Asparagus | Leek | Spinach | Nectarine |
| Beet | Lettuce | Tomato | Peach |
| Cabbage | Parsnip | Turnip | Plum |
| Carrot | Pea | | |
| Cauliflower | Potato | Blackberry | Acacia |
| Celery | Pumpkin | Raspberry | Blue gum |
| Kidney bean | Radish | Strawberry | Tea |

439 (651) to pay the government tax (presumably land revenue). Badagas slowly adopted "English" vegetables, the term commonly applied to vegetables introduced by the English (Table III). By 1865 the Badagas were growing potatoes, which were to become their main commercial crop (Markham 1862: 367; Metz 1864: 153-154).

• 241 311 Major changes in crop emphasis from the late 1800s to the present are best revealed by statistics resulting mainly from Badaga cultivation. In 1875 there were 15,728 acres of Italian millet, 4,662 acres of little millet, 3,761 acres of barley, 3,430 acres of finger millet, 3,199 acres of wheat, only 734 acres of potatoes, 355 acres of mustard, 169 acres of vegetables, 144 acres of fenugreek, 67 acres of horse gram (Dolichos biflorus L.), and 66 acres of poppies grown on the Nilgiris (Grigg et al. 1880: xii). In 1895 Italian millet was still the leading crop, but potato acreage had risen to 2,032 acres. Poppies outlawed by the 1878 Opium Act were no longer grown (Benson 1895: 432-433). Little millet had become the most cultivated cereal in 1905, and finger millet was growing in importance (Francis 1908: 164). Demands for potatoes during World War I helped to convert Badaga agriculture from a subsistence stage with some commercial crop production to a commercial farming stage. In 1914 there were about 4,000 acres with potatoes on the Nilgiris, but by 1920 potato acreage had doubled (Rao and Azariah 1953: 69). Before 1925 finger and little millets became the two important cereal crops, and remained the leading cereals from that time (Wood 1927: 210-223). Potato acreage has continually increased: by 1938 there were 12,000 acres, by 1950 almost 17,000 acres, and in 1960-61 there was a total

241 (656) (177) (311) (310)

•241 (311) (433) [439] of 20,600 acres in the main season and 2,400 acres in the lesser (Rao and Azariah 1953: 69; Krishnamurthi 1953: 193; Madras Department of Agriculture 1960-61: single page). The production of the 1960-61 potato crop was approximately 61,900 tons and 7,060 tons. Most potatoes are shipped to Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and other parts of India via Mettupalaiyam city at the base of the Nilgiris (Figure 1).

175 241 439 Despite increased potato production on dry fields and the eating of imported rice by Badagas, most early 1800 cereals continue to be cultivated on dry fields. Cereals raised mainly for home consumption also enter local markets. Produce from old commercial plants, excluding poppies, is still sold locally and on the plains. These plants are grown with "English" vegetables in kitchen gardens. Apart from potatoes, other "English" vegetables (Table III)--cabbages and carrots for example--are sometimes raised as dry field crops. Fruit trees originating from nectarine, peach, and plum plants introduced before 1836 (Table III) and Chinese pears introduced in 1846 (Price 1908: 125) are grown in Badaga orchards. Mandarin oranges grown in multilayer gardens are also of some commercial importance. Badagas have taken advantage of ready markets for fruit and "English" vegetables. Since completion of the railroad to Ootacamund in 1908, European and Indian families scattered over India have purchased, through agents, baskets of fruit and "English" vegetables sent out at periodic intervals from the Nilgiris. On market days produce from Badaga landholdings is displayed and sold in the Coonoor, Kotagiri, Ootacamund, and smaller markets. A few Badagas use their kitchen gardens to grow introduced berries (Table III), and strawberries in

175 245 439 (245)

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)

AW50 Badaga AW50
Kota AW55
Kurumba AW56
Toda AW60
Madras Tribes AW63
Kasuva

136

245 Gardens. Multilayer gardens owned by a few Badagas are mostly located in valleys below 6,000 feet and on outer Nilgiri slopes. They are usually some distance away from Badaga hamlets or villages. Coffee is frequently grown with jack, lime, and mandarin orange trees, but a few other plants grown in Irula and Kurumba multilayer gardens may also be raised. Badaga single layer coffee gardens occur in localities similar to those with multilayer gardens, but their single layer tea gardens are now scattered over the entire region utilized by upper Nilgiri Badagas. The tea gardens near to or far from communities may now be considered a typical part of the Badaga occupance pattern. But even more typical are the kitchen gardens which surround most Badaga hamlets and villages.

•241 Kitchen garden plots are usually protected by ditches, barbed wire fences, horizontal pole fences, piled brushwood, piled earth walls, piled stone walls, or planted shrub rows (Yucca sp., for example). Plots are usually small, a wide variety of plants are grown, seed may be sown or planted, tubers are planted, and intercropping is common. The agricultural cycle controlling planting, sowing, and harvesting in kitchen gardens generally corresponds with the dry fields agricultural cycle. Thus, plants are grown in kitchen gardens during a main agricultural season (karbokan) and a lesser agricultural season (kadaibokan). The varying personalities of cultivators are reflected in the different crops and crop combinations occuring in plots (Figures 19 and 20). 244 Alternate planting of kidney beans (Phaseolus vulgaris L.) and potatoes on paralleled ridges is a popular practice. Frequently, paralleled but more widely separated intersecting cross-

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 137

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)

AW50 Badaga AW50
Kota AW55
Kurumba AW56
Toda AW60
Madras Tribes AW63
Kasuva



241
311

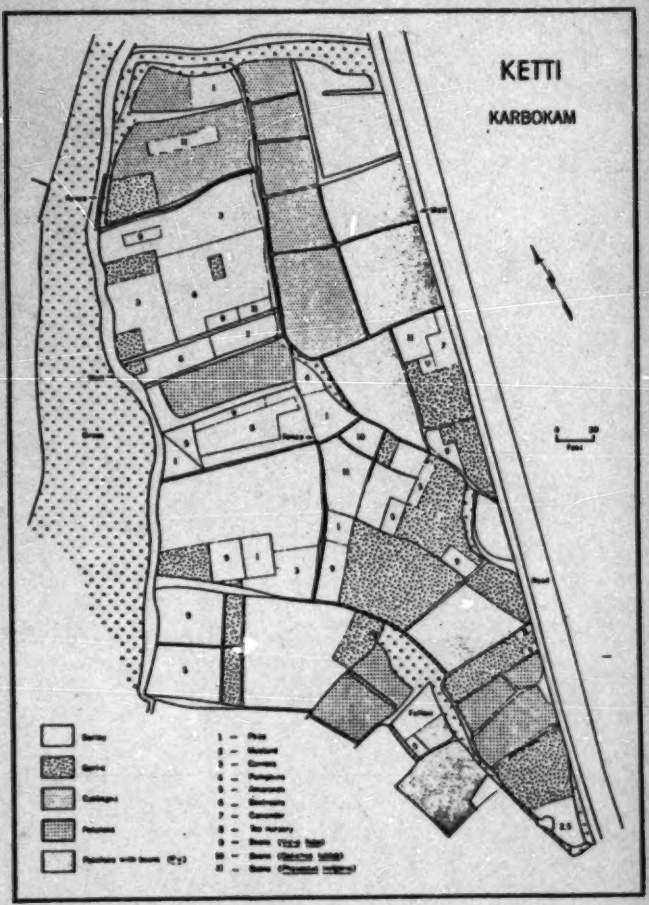


Figure 19. Plots cultivated in the main season

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)
AW50 Badaga AW50
Kota AW55
Kurumba AW56
Toda AW60
Madras Tribes AW63
Kasuva



• 241
311

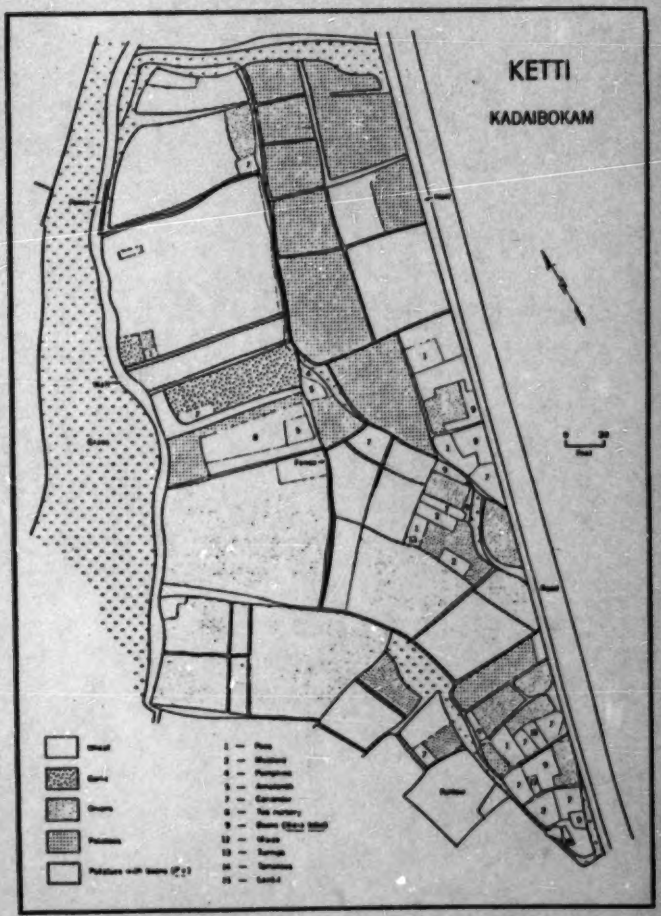


Figure 20. The same plots cultivated in the lesser season

244 ridges constructed in the same plots are planted with broad beans (Vicia faba L.) or peas. Kitchen gardens are typically better manured and cared for. Because they are nearer to community cattle-pens and (514) livestock huts, more manure is likely to be placed on them. Due to the absence of toilets in houses, community dwellers naturally defecate [344] more frequently on nearby plots. And lastly, women recurrently spread kitchen ashes or trash over kitchen gardens. When family members have • 241 time to spare, they may easily care for kitchen garden plots near the 592 communities in which they live. Women work on them between their 462 household duties, and men who are regularly employed work on them during off duty hours.

175 Shifting agriculture. In 1800 the Badagas were practicing shift-
241 ing slash-burn (kottukadu) agriculture (Buchanan 1870, 1: 462). As
361 later writers described Badaga hamlets and villages in terms of permanence, it is conjectured that Badagas then dwelt in permanent communities and cultivated different plots on the nearby countryside from year to year. From the time Englishmen started to administer the Nilgiris
241 until the late 1800s, the bhurty revenue system existed over the upper
651 Nilgiris. Under this system a farmer could hold up to ten times the taxed land he actually cultivated in any single year. Therefore, a man who paid taxes on five acres could hold nine other five-acre plots scattered over the upper Nilgiris. Plot alternation accompanied by the necessary clearance of vegetation off fallowed land not cultivated for years, or off newly claimed forest land, formed a system of shifting agriculture. Another system was followed in the western Kundahs, which

241 651 were transferred from Malabar to the Nilgiri District in 1860. After a farmer paid a tax ranging from one to one rupee and eight annas per plow, or four to eight annas per hoe (erkadu kottukadu revenue system), he could cultivate as much land as he desired to in any chosen locality. Forest lands were not excluded. Consequently, cultivated plots were constantly being abandoned for new ones opened up or recleared. The two land revenue systems resulting in shifting agriculture were formally abolished in 1863, but in actual practice they lingered on until about 1884 (Francis 1908: 268-270).

651 In 1863 the English instituted a system of taxation whereby farmers were expected to pay taxes on all claimed lands, but inaccurate knowledge concerning claimed lands and actual agricultural practices led to continuance of old ways. As a result of the Final Land Settlement of 1881-84, all claimed lands were mapped and accurately recorded [423] for taxation purposes. Each individual was given a title (patta) to his land, but from thenceforth was expected to pay land revenue based on land extent and quality (Francis 1908: 274-278). During post-1884 years remnants of old practices remained. Although Badagas paid revenue according to the lands owned by them, an individual's scattered plots away from a community might be cultivated periodically during the years, or left vacant for years until the owner decided to place more land under cultivation. Plots close to a community, especially those used for kitchen gardens, were usually cultivated at least once a year (Ranga 1934: 13-16). Nowadays, however, 1) fertilizer application, 2) cash obtained through potato sales, 3) the spreading desire to plant more tea, and 4) decreasing opportunities for individuals to

311 [651] [178] [291]

311 purchase cultivable land near Badaga communities have lowered the
(178) possibilities of land away from a community remaining uncultivated
(241) from year to year.

175 The agricultural cycle. Harkness (1832: 136-137) gave details
221 concerning two yearly agricultural seasons, each of which coincided
241 with westerly or easterly monsoons. Italian, koda (Paspalum scrobiculatum L.), little, and finger millet, amaranth, barley, wheat, garlic, onions, and mustard were sown in May, then harvested from August into September. After this main season ground was sometimes left fallow until the following May, but some Badagas prepared soil almost immediately for chick peas (Cicer arietinum L.), fenugreek, lentil (Ervum lens L.), and poppies, which were all said to be harvested in December and January. Harkness, however, understated the maturation time for poppies--a period closer to nine months. Poppy seeds were probably planted in May, for cooler weather during dry months was the best time to extract poppy juice. In March and April seeds of gourds, pumpkins, and lablab beans were planted. From the first two species and their progeny produce was gathered for years. Lablab beans mature in five to seven months, depending upon the variety grown. Another millet identified as koralie (another variety of Italian millet?) and sown in March-April supposedly took nine months to mature, but it is doubtful that this grain grew so long before maturing.

221 The two agricultural seasons of the year have persisted. Sowing
241 and planting during the main season (karbokan) take place from March into April, and harvesting extends from July into September. In the

221 241 main season emphasis is placed on dry field food grain and cash crop production. Typical dry field crops are finger, Italian, and little millet, amaranth (Amaranthus caudatus L. and A. hypochontriacus L.), barley (Hordeum distichon L. and H. vulgare L.), buckwheat (Fagopyrum sagittatum Gilib), potatoes, and other "English" vegetables. Koda millet is now rarely cultivated on the Nilgiris. Wheat (mostly Triticum aestivum L.) requiring drier conditions is grown in the main season on those sections receiving more rain during the easterly monsoon, but will be grown in the lesser season on other lands receiving more rain during the westerly monsoon. Many dry fields are left fallow between two main seasons, but kitchen gardens seldom are.

241 [221] During the lesser season (kadaibokam) sowing and planting are performed from August into October, and harvesting extends from December into February. The lesser season is used primarily for growing seed potatoes and kitchen garden plants providing vegetables for home consumption or cash crops for sale. Assorted beans, cabbage, carrot, chick pea, coriander, fenugreek, garlic, lentil, maize, mustard, onion, pea, tomato, and turnip plants grown in kitchen gardens during the lesser season actually thrive in both seasons. Plant combinations within kitchen garden plots vary or sometimes remain the same from season to season (Figures 19 and 20). A kitchen garden plot in one season may also be covered by a dry field crop in the next. Perennial gourds and pumpkins are often grown on community middens or scattered odd plots. Little or no care need be given them, for seeds deposited on the ground from a few rotting fruits take root and form new generations.

243 were constructed in the fields, but there were also well cowdunged permanent threshing floors within communities. To thresh out grain, cattle were muzzled, lined up, tied together and to a central post, (462) and then driven around in circles over straw and grain. Women, however, used threshing sticks to thresh out grain on courtyards fronting (251) houses. Sun-dried grain was stored away in large conical baskets plastered inside and out with cowdung, but finger millet was often kept in pits.

• 241 407 In 1908 plows were still being used, but by 1930 they were no longer in general use (Francis 1908: 166; Carl 1930: 32). The abandonment of plows resulted from the need for deeper soil turnover and ridging in potato cultivation. This was touched upon by Robertson (1875: 26), who stated that "as the native plough cannot ridge the land, the preparation of the soil, except the mere stirring and loosening, is all done by manual labor, and the cost of putting in the crop is much higher than it need be were a mouldboard plough used; . . . ." Three Swedish moldboard plows were sent to the Nilgiris in 1882-83, and a Badaga purchased one after a plowing exhibit at Ketti (Madras Department of Revenue Settlement and Agriculture 1884: 19; M.D. of R.S. and A. 1886: 6). However, Badagas never adopted moldboard plows. If they had done so, it is likely that plows would still be used. In 1908 244 412 potato plots were prepared through use of digging forks, introduced by the English, and hoes (Francis 1908: 167-168). During World War I, when potato production was greatly increased, the borrowed English digging fork rapidly replaced the plow. There is a distinct possibility that varied hoe-forks now used by Badagas were locally developed in that

244 period (Figure 15).
412 In present dry field crop production land occasionally remains
unterraced, but is more often shallowly terraced. Many farmers are
• 241 now, by requirement of the Madras Government, hewing out slopes to
(666) form horizontal croplands on tiered terraces (Plate X, C). Dry fields
frequently remain unenclosed. When land left in fallow for some time
is again to be cultivated, vegetation will first be removed and burned
in small piles.

In preparing ground for potatoes, men turn the soil with digging
244 forks. After about two or three weeks, clods are broken by women and
[462] children. Both blunt and forked sides of hoe-forks are used in this
(857) task. Undesirable stones and weeds are removed at the same time.
Stones are utilized in terrace or wall construction, and ashes from
weeds burned in piles are scattered over the land. Manure and compost
brought in by women, bullock carts, or trucks are scattered over the
(439) soil. Badagas sometimes purchased buffalo-dung from the Todas. After
fertilizer has been worked into the soil with hoes or hoe-forks, par-
alleled potato ridges are constructed with similar implements. As
this is a hard task, men often assist. Men, women, and children do
the planting. A small amount of chemical fertilizer is included with
each seed potato. At least two weedings are carried out through use
(462) of smaller hoes, hoe-forks, and small weeding-hoes. Women and children
(857) usually perform this task, and at the same time they mound the ridges.
The first mounding aids in keeping spreading roots covered, and the
(592) second helps protect the plant bases from strong monsoon winds. Most
(251) family members work during the busy harvest season. After tubers dug

231 771 796 [351] day, but only the most devout follow this practice now (Harkness 1832: 114-115). In January, shortly before goddess Masthi Hethai is honored at Bergani, the Badagas celebrate Martu Pongal. Courtyards fronting houses are swept and freshly cowdunged. Women and children then decorate the courtyards with kitchen ash or powdered lime (Plate X, E). Before each house a square with diagonal lines is outlined. After the decorations have been completed, a priest leads a cow through the village from house to house. When the cow stops at each house, it is fed a flatcake made with millet, rice, or wheat and served on a platter placed in the center of the above-mentioned square (Plate X, F). Household women bow to the ground as the cow eats. After it has eaten and had its mouth washed off, the cow is led to the next house. Some time later a calf led around in the same fashion receives similar treatment at each house. Finally, community families feast upon flatcakes served with sugar or curry.

174 241 796 [174] Hunting. Although writers have not referred to the Badagas as hunters, there is some evidence that they were. Past practices are probably preserved in more recent ritual. Among other acts connected with the opening of the main agricultural season at Melur, Francis (1908: 339) recorded that a hunting net was laid before a Badaga priest. After the priest had prayed for a favorable agricultural season, a pretense was made of spearing two fowls which had been thrown into the net, and it was then placed across a game path. A wild animal (sambar deer, if possible) driven into the net was slain, and Badagas divided its carcass among themselves. In July, 1963, a few Badaga men

174 224

174 224 from Ketti took the shredded remnant of a hunting net and two spears to a point upon the mountainside behind Ketti. While two men held up the net remnant, two with spears charged at it. Then all sat in a circle and sang folk songs before returning the equipment to the Hirodaya temple. Using these examples, it seems likely that the Badagas once hunted with nets and spears. Now they use muzzle-loaders, 411 (224) (241) shotguns, and rifles. Although a few go hunting, most guns are employed in the protection of crops from such animals as black-naped hares (Lepus nigricollis F. Cuv.), pigs, and porcupines.

175 177 464 Other occupations. From the time Englishmen started to settle on the Nilgiris, outside employment became available. Both poor and wealthier Badagas took advantage of ever-increasing job opportunities. By 1829 many poorer Badagas were performing all types of labor (Hough 1829: 96). In 1860 a few were working on coffee plantations, but by 463 1868 many males were working as artisans or laborers on European-owned plantations (Markham 1862: 376; Shortt 1868: 58). There were Badaga clerks, cordite factory workers, building and road contractors, forest guards, gardeners, and school teachers by 1909, and before 1934 wage earning became the main means of livelihood for many Badagas (Thurston 1909, 1: 63; Ranga 1934: 11). Badagas are presently employed in the Government of India Cordite Factory, the Needle Industries (India) Ltd., and the Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing Company in (871) the Nilgiris. Some Badagas have a high school education, and a few are university graduates. As a result, there are Badaga clerks and professionals employed in private industries, or in positions with the

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)

AW50 Badaga AW50
Kota AW55
Kurumba AW56
Toda AW60
Madras Tribes AW63
Kasuva



## 1. The Badagas

361 [103] [137] Occupance patterns. The Badaga communities of Basukolli, Devala, Kolapalli, Marakarai, Mundhatti, Pandalur, and Soladi are scattered over the Nilgiri Wynaad (Figure 2). They lie in sections with deciduous forest remnants and patches covered by bamboo thickets. The tendency for Badagas to live in nucleated communities according to ancestral custom is in the Wynaad opposed by the tendency for people to scatter over the landscape according to Malabarian custom. As a result, at one community members live in a hamlet, at another some live in a hamlet while others own houses dispersed over the nearby landscape, and at a third all Badagas dwell in dispersed houses within the area covered by the community. To cite specific examples, Marakarai has a hamlet, Devala has a hamlet and dispersed houses, and all Soladi houses are dispersed. Nucleated development follows three steps: 1) a single house is or a few joined houses are first constructed next to a courtyard, 2) a new house is then positioned adjacent to the courtyard and approximately vertical to an antecedent house, and 3) another house is built on the other side of the courtyard and approximately parallel to the previously constructed house (Figure 22). Figuratively, development leads to change from a straight line to an L-shaped to a U-shaped house arrangement. Single dispersed houses are also fronted by courtyards. The growing of at least one sacred tulasi plant within a small rectangular enclosure on each courtyard is a distinctive Badaga cultural trait. Frequent sweepings with a cowdung solution over courtyards, ground surrounding houses,

241 M8 351 356

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 701

351 and house floors is not only an ancient Hindu custom, but a useful
356 one in that it helps keep termites away.

Rice is everywhere the predominant food crop, and wet rice
243 production is concentrated in broad valley bottoms (Plate XII, A).
As a result, valley sides are seldom terraced. All Badaga houses,
361 whether they be within nucleated centers or scattered around, are
located on hillsides or hilltops next to lower-lying wet rice fields.
Women thus have to fetch water from streams in the valleys below.
(343) Occasionally, small huts or shelters (pandals) for storage or work
are erected near houses. Nilgiri Wynaad Badagas do not build temples
368 in house-rows, but do construct temples in separate worship centers
with pagoda trees. After the single wet rice harvest, buffaloes and
231 a few cattle are kept at night in periodically shifted circular bam-
boo pens erected on dried fields. While rice is growing, the same
livestock are housed nightly in huts with no set form located at some
distance from dwellings. Threshing floors and stacked hay lie near
241 dwellings. Most houses are surrounded by multilayer gardens which
offer cooling shade during each dry season and protection against
torrential rain with high winds during the rainy monsoon seasons.
Close to houses there may also be small kitchen gardens or single
layer gardens. Scattered dry fields on hills are located near or at
231 some distance from houses. Livestock (goats and sheep were not seen
by me) are grazed on 1) rice stubble left after each rice harvest,
2) grasses growing over dry fields untilled for some time, 3) grasses
within nearby degenerate dry and moist deciduous forest or bamboo
368 thickets, and 4) savannas. In the area associated with each community

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)
AW50 Badaga AW50
Kota AW55
Kurumba AW56
Toda AW60
Madras Tribes AW63
Kasuva



222 262 137 are collected when bamboos (Bambusa arundinacea Willd., Dendrocalamus strictus Nees) periodically produce seeds and die off.

Mullu Kurumbas living in the western Nilgiri Wynaad and nearby Malabar Wynaad frequently hunt with bows and arrows. However, in 1963 000 411 000 I found no proof of their use by the Badagas and Paniyas inhabiting the Nilgiri Wynaad. Again, the evidence indicates that in most of the Nilgiri region hunting nets and spears have in the past been standard hunting implements. Paniyas have gained a reputation for hunting tigers with hunting nets and spears. According to Francis (1908: 30-31), hunting nets from various households were joined into a "V" surrounding a tiger. Directed by Paniyas up in trees, other Paniyas with spears drove the tiger toward the "V's" point while simultaneously closing the opening. The surrounding nets were slowly moved in during a period of several days, and Paniyas lit nightly fires all around the enclosure. Finally, the half dead and harassed tiger was speared to death. Similar hunts are said to still be held upon occasion.

• 241 Gardens. In multilayer gardens around houses these species were noted: guava, jack, mandarin orange, mango, pagoda, pummelo trees, areca (Areca catechu L.), fishtail (Caryota urens L.) palms, banana fronds, papaya plants, sugarcane, shrubby amaranth (Amaranthus cruentus L., common race), brinjal, castor, chili (Capsicum annuum L.), coffee, okra (Hibiscus esculentus Rend.), tomato, edible root-yielding canna, elephant foot yam (Amorphophalus campanulatus Bl.), tapioca, taro, creeping lablab bean, bitter-gourd, pumpkin, rose, sweet-potato,

241 and yam (compare with Table II).

Flowers and leaves of fishtail palms are used for ornamental purposes. Badagas also grow bananas in single layer gardens. After 245 cutting off stems laden with green bananas, Badagas and Paniyas place them in banana pits with pots in which green wood is burned (Figure 23). The heat and smoke within pits sealed with planks and mud cause bananas to ripen rapidly in two or three days. Leaves from planted amaranth are the only parts eaten. Badagas also eat leaves plucked 222 262 from wild amaranths (Amaranthus gracilis Desf., A. spinosus L.) 137 commonly growing in gardens. Leaves and roots of planted taro are edible. However, only the leaves cut from wild taro (Colocasia antiquorum Schott) growing next to streams and in gardens are eaten. 241 Ceara rubber plants (Manihot glasiovii Muell. Arg.) descended from stock used in experimental rubber production on adjacent plantations are now weeds occasionally left growing in gardens. Brinjal and chili seeds are first sprouted in a small nursery on stilts (Figure 23). Both plants are also planted in kitchen gardens with parallel earthen ridges. At Hundhatti, in 1963, there was a ridged kitchen garden with alternated kidney beans, brinjals, chilies, and maize. Elephant foot yam or taro are occasionally grown on ridges within single layer shaded gardens (Plate XII, F). Tapioca is increasingly being cultivated as a dry field crop planted on hoed ridges, but is not a typical Badaga crop.

243 Dry field agriculture. As upland dry fields are often left fallow, only small acreages are covered with crops at any single time.

243 In field preparation, natural vegetation which has spread into fallow fields is cleared, dried, and burned. Ashes are then spread over the earth. If available, livestock dung is applied. Soil is loosened by periodic plowings with a plow drawn by a single team or by several teams drawing plows simultaneously. Earth clods are broken with hoes and hoe-forks, and the same implements are used to work broadcast seed 221 into the soil. Sowing takes place mainly in June and July, so that harvesting will occur during a period of declining rainfall in October, November, and December. Finger millet is commonly grown, and little 241 millet is occasionally cultivated. Mustard may be mixed with the grain crop, and in one field I saw there were pumpkin vines growing over termite hills. Some fields are quite neglected, and others are weeded to varying degrees. In harvesting, sickles are used to remove grain heads. When finger millet is harvested, the grain heads are first processed in the same way that upper Nilgiri Badagas process them. 250 Grain is stored after being trampled out by buffaloes or cattle and dried in the sun. Men are responsible for heavy work in field preparation, plowing, sowing, and care of livestock trampling out grain. 243 462 Women, aided sometimes by children, do most of the other work associated with dry field cultivations.

243 231 221 Wet rice cultivation. During the dry season, after livestock have eaten remaining rice stubble, exposed soils on fields become hardened and cracked in the sun's heat. Livestock penned on changed locations help fertilize the earth. Starting in April, after some mango showers have loosened field surfaces, the men prepare a few

8: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AW30 Badaga AW30



(amongst others) either his FZD or his MBD, but there is a marked preference for a FZD and some good reasons for it.[2] One involves a feeling of status congruence. Men, it is believed, demean themselves somewhat by becoming bride-givers. This is acknowledged nowadays by the payment of dowry, a new custom among the Badagas. But a young man's spiritual guide is not the family priest in this community; instead it is always his MB, whom he calls *guru* and also accords much respect. It is thus incongruent if that particular man should give his daughter in marriage to the very boy he has counselled. Marriage with a FZD, or with the daughter of a MB other than one's *guru*, gets around this emotional problem.

Patrilocality is another preference that is usually spoken of as an unbending rule. Yet there is in point of fact a term, *aḷiya se:tu*, for the live-in son-in-law, a young man who opts to live with his wife's family after their marriage. This is considered an undignified and pitiful thing to do, but it can bring real material advantages to a man whose wife has no brothers, and is a necessary alternative to virilocal residence in such a family. The epic ballad *Ba:la Sevana* deals with a man who moves into his father-in-law's village to help with the buffaloes, leaving his own mother in her village lamenting the loss of her only son, and bemoaning her fate since "there will be nobody to set fire to her corpse." It is interesting to note that Ba:la Sevana married into the Kunda region, one that used to be so economically distressed that its children were often sold into bondage for a period of years, thereby becoming the household servants of Badagas in other parts of the Nilgiris. The live-in son-in-law was one institution that helped make up for the loss of male children in those bad years, when bondage was the only answer to the threat of starvation in that region.

## 2. Patriliny and Patrilocality

Today the Badagas are successful cash-crop farmers specialising in cabbages, potatoes, and tea; those of the Kunda region are the wealthiest in the District. Until the early part of this century, on the other hand, they were all mainly farmers of millet. This and several other grains, together with dairy produce, provided their subsistence. When one delves further back in their history, to the 17th and 18th centuries when they were already well established on the Nilgiri Hills but with a population of under 2,000, one finds that the Badagas were already millet farmers yet thought of themselves as primarily buffalo herdsmen. This is reflected very clearly in a number of their epic ballads dating from that time. Since each family or lineage used once to have its own herd of buffaloes, then it is legitimate for us to consider

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[2] Letters placed in single apostrophes, 'A', 'B', 'C', etc.; stand for hypothetical people and are like personal names. Letters placed in double quotation marks, e.g. "M," "F," etc., indicate classificatory rather than actual kin relationships, and should be read as "in the category of mothers," and so on. Z = sister, S = son, etc.

121 the kinship system in the Badaga case as having developed as a means of assigning and transferring ownership of and rights in property, especially cattle and houses, but to a lesser extent land too. We must remember that [241] in the early days Badagas practised swidden agriculture (although strangely that is not mentioned in the early ballads), and the Nilgiri population density was so low that land really had no market value there and was very easy to come by.

233 Now, keeping a herd of buffaloes requires adequate grazing and certain other conditions. One is the presence of a number of active men, typically brothers, who will keep the herd together while grazing and fend off tigers [539] when possible. Women could not do this work: the epic poem *Ba:la Sevana* [462] ridicules the mother of the hero for trying to drive the family's herd out to graze with a stick in her hand. Both swidden and ordinary plough agriculture 241 also called for the combined efforts of several men (as well as a number of 476 women), and so here too Badagas found a good reason for cultivating their 596 fields as a joint family. Many still do so today. The point to be noted is that both the buffalo-herding and ox-ploughing and swidden cultivation were 182 economic conditions that favoured patrilocality, the joint family, and brother/sister exchange at marriage—this latter a preference which maintained a balance of manpower between two intermarrying families or settlements. If a youth married his FZD and her brother in turn married *his* 581 MBD, brother/sister exchange would result, the ideal of cross-cousin mar- 582 riage would be honoured, the two families involved would have asserted their 583 equality, and close relations would ensue between them. Where brother/ 586 sister exchange has occurred, divorce becomes rather more difficult because it places great strains on the other couple, those who are not getting divorced.

591 The girls in this system invariably go off to another village in marriage 881 at or shortly after menarche, where they will be needed to *(a)* do house-work 462 and look after small children; *(b)* do some sowing, weeding and reaping in the fields; and *(c)* raise a new generation of farmers and buffalo herdsmen. In this married situation the birth of a son means that a woman has largely 602 fulfilled all three of her obligations to the family she has joined—for on [885] marriage a Badaga girl relinquishes membership in her natal family, lineage, 562 and village, and joins those of her husband. Her membership in them is made [851] especially manifest when her husband dies and a son continues to support her in her husband's village; and when she too dies it is her husband's village and its headman who are responsible for conducting her funeral, with the collaboration of her husband's family.

562 The economic decision-making rests with the adult men: when to sow, what to plant in each kind of soil, when and where to move the cattle in search of new grazing, when to harvest, and, in former times, when to move 182 the swidden. These decisions call for accurate topographical knowledge, and 562 it is thus both appropriate and necessary that the detailed local knowledge which boys acquire in work and play should be put to good use when they

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
AW50 Badaga AW50



764 (539) 'May deaths cease, may sorrows cease, may everything be for our good; by the meritoriousness of our ancestors and by the meritoriousness of the ancestors of our ancestors. May this person (that has died) mingle with them':

After the bones have thus been passed round they are taken by (539) the three who displayed them and buried in a pit built of stone in the cremation ground with the following incantation:—

*Doḍḍavar kunnavar śatli hatla*
*Akâlânda ikâlaga śattavakar śatti hatla*
*Kûṭṭá kuṭumba ellâ ondâgi hogali*

'May the young and the old that have died, may all persons who have died from time immemorial up to the present time—may all these mingle into one'.

There is no difference at all as to the ceremonies observed on the third day. Those Baḍagas who cremate their dead perform exactly the same ceremonies on that day as those who bury.

121 We have thus examined as far as is possible the origin of the Baḍagas, and have seen that they are most probably immigrants from Muisûr. We have noticed the chief characteristics of the race and have traced a Baḍaga from his birth to his funeral. It has not been possible to give an account of all the ceremonies and customs of this interesting people but the main ones have been described, and it will be seen that they are essentially those of an agricultural people. It has been seen how prominent a place the buffalo and 796 the *Hâgôṭu* or milk-house hold in their religious ceremonies. To 241 those already mentioned may be added the ceremony which takes place at the beginning of harvest when the first bundle of ripe ears of corn is brought home, husked, cooked with milk, placed in the 181 *Hâgôṭu* and eaten. The wants of the Baḍaga are few and his aspirations may be summed up in the following words:—*Kattadda erumê kareli bitta hola ellâ beḷeli*: 'May our buffaloes give us calves and may the fields yield us harvest'.

S. M. NATESA SASTRI.